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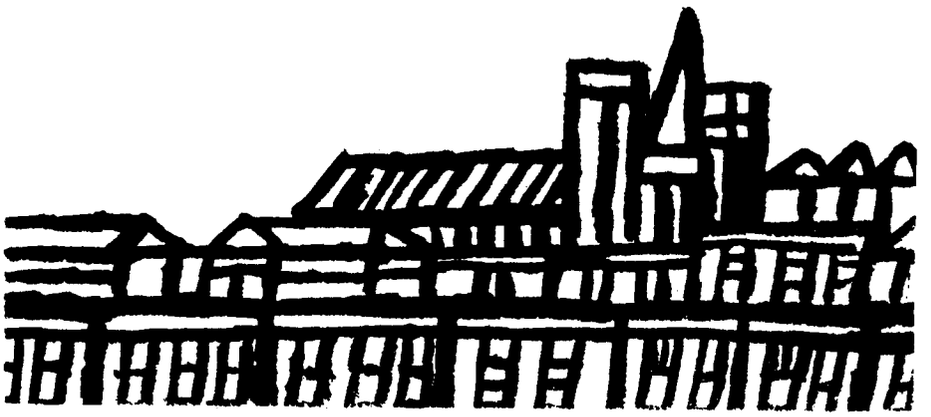

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POLITICS AND THE SACRED

Terry Eagleton

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Saul Maloff **THE WEEK THAT WAS** • *Jack Newfield* **A MAN FOR THIS SEASON?** • *James Becket* **CHILE'S MINI-REVOLUTION** • *Maurice Goldbloom* **KING AND JUNTA** • *Charles Bronze* **FRANK CONROY'S 'STOP-TIME'** • *Harry Mooney* **HAROLD NICOLSON'S DIARIES** • *John McKenzie* **ROBERT ADOLFS' GRAVE OF GOD** • *Jonathan Mirsky* **CHINA: THE OTHER COMMUNISM** • *and much more*

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Father Leo Croghan's call to the American bishops in the Dec. 16 *Ave Maria,* that they lift the mortal sin classification of missing Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation continues discussion on a topic broached during the third session of the Council, when the Church's juridical character was being examined and judged by most to be exaggerated.

Bishop La Ravoire Morrow of India opened Pandora's box (Oct. 26, 1964) by attacking the Friday abstinence law, remarking that "the mentality responsible for such legislation seems to be more legalistic than genuinely religious, and makes the Church a laughing stock." How can eating meat on Friday deserve the same punishment as committing adultery or murder? he asked.

The next day Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV broadened the question to include Sunday and holy day Mass obligations and their penalties. "The childhood of the human race has passed," he exclaimed. "The Church is a mother, but would even a stepmother impose such punishments?"

Interestingly enough, on this as on so many Council questions, one of the calmest, most reasoned voices around Rome was that of British theologian Charles Davis. At a briefing for newsmen at the time, Davis explained that laws such as those governing Friday abstinence and obligatory Mass attendance were objectionable less because of the laws themselves than the fact that they betrayed "a primitive approach to morality" and showed "no understanding of the psychological complexities of the working conscience"—a significant comment, perhaps, in the light of his own theological development.

Father Croghan's proposal, to return to that, is not substantially different from what was being talked up in Rome in '64. Croghan is not for the shutting up of churches, nor even for the abolition of holy days. He would couple the explicit dropping of the mortal sin penalty for missing Mass with the issuance by U. S. bishops of a "strong reminder" on the need for Christian worship and sharing in the Eucharist.

Croghan, a priest of the Diocese of Charleston, S.C., sees several positive effects resulting from such an action, one being that the Mass will be seen more completely as the act of renewal of one's free covenant with God in Jesus Christ.

The arguments in favor of a change in the obligatory Mass are persuasive, but the guess is that change will not be soon in coming. The editors of *The Priest* give one strong reason: "If Sunday Mass goes, there goes the Sunday collection. And if the Sunday collection goes, there go our parochial schools."

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Add *The Critic* management to the multiplying number in the Catholic press swinging to an unequivocal peace position on Vietnam. A statement by publisher Dan Herr and editor Joel Wells in the current issue states:

"Because we believe that the debate [over the war] has now exhausted itself and because to us only one conclusion seems valid after all arguments have been heard, we feel bound to submit that: the United States should get the hell out of Vietnam, and fast."

•

Not a few in the Diocese of Miami are grumbling over the restriction on freedom caused by inserting into the final draft of the constitution of the diocesan priests' senate an article forbidding the senate "to conduct polls on any matter or to distribute questionnaires or to make surveys throughout the diocese without the permission of the bishop."

One explanation for the prohibition: episcopal irritation over the participation of several of the younger priests of the diocese in the celibacy poll of the National Association for Pastoral Renewal.

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Msgr. Charles Owen Rice, columnist for the Pittsburgh and Steubenville diocesan papers, is another who rejects Catholic Relief Services' rationale for defending its aid program to South Vietnam's Popular Forces.

Charging CRS director Bishop Edward Swanstrom with being "responsible for the patriotic prostitution" of the relief agency, Rice writes:

"Bishop Swanstrom, and those who let him run, are damaging the Catholic Church more than the Viet Cong, and the wound they make on the Church will need a hundred years of healing. Actually, he and missionaries who react as he does would do better if they stayed home; missionary teaching and charity cannot serve an imperial master and a divine master at the same time."

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An interesting sample of the anti-American propaganda which the U. S. is being hit with in the Far East by its involvement in Vietnam is furnished by *Link,* an Indian publication:

"In the central highlands . . . the main assignment of a South Vietnamese regiment is to arrange for the 173rd Airborne Brigade a continuous supply of beer, vegetables and prostitutes. Another Vietnamese ranger unit does similar service for the 4th U. S. division near Pleiku. Every American air base in South Vietnam is surrounded by specially erected hamlets which house prostitutes for U. S. soldiers. These local arrangements are for men on duty, while the Australian Government has entered into a contract with the U. S. Government for similar services for the GIs on longer holidays."

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Odds and Ends:

—Father John McKenzie, in criticizing reviewers of ex-Father James Kavanaugh's book, also criticizes Kavanaugh: "I still do not think . . . that the way to solve the problems of the Church is to get up and shout, 'The hell with it.' "

—Arthur Sylvester, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara's former press officer, on the Pentagon press corps: "For six years I watched cover stories go down smooth as cream, when I thought they would cause a frightful gargle."

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Vietnam

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: William V. Shannon's cautious support for the Administration's war policies (Dec. 8) is based on an awesome abstraction: "The great issue in the world today is freedom vs. tyranny [and] the United States is the principal defender of freedom." I suppose that Americans really believe themselves to be the principal defenders of freedom throughout the world. The experience of Nazism and World War II got us used to thinking in terms of a worldwide brotherhood of free men, centered around Washington, doing battle with a malevolent conspiracy against civilization. And, as Mr. Shannon suggests, America has much to be proud of in her war record: Americans did perform an inestimable service in the battle against Germany and Japan, as did many others (among them Marshal Tito and Ho Chi Minh). But to abstract the issues of World War II and throw them over the battle in Asia is to mistake the mantle for the thing it covers. The CIA is not the OSS; the Green Berets are not the Resistance. And the issue is not freedom vs. tyranny, nor is it nationalism vs. imperialism. It is class vs. class, have-nots against haves; in short, an ugly civil war that is also a revolution, in which neither side can name "liberty" among its objectives.

With the possible exception of Japan, the amount of "freedom" in Communist and non-Communist Asia is not worth a bucket of spit, let alone the bones of an American infantryman; so if it is "freedom" that Mr. Shannon is concerned about, he has a mighty task ahead of him, and one which the Asians themselves will care about only infrequently. For the issue raised by revolution in Asia (and Latin America) is not "Shall we be free?" but "Who shall govern?" The Vietnamese are not being asked to choose between Marshall Ky and Adolf Hitler. They (and we)are being asked to choose between Marshall Ky and Ho Chi Minh. Between those two, unfor-

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PEACE AND PACIFISM

Peace has always had a good press; pacifism has not. One reason for the difference is that the word "peace" can be used to mean almost anything: peace through war, peace through victory, peace through conquest, peace through destruction, and so on. Statesmen and politicians like a word like that; they can use it indiscriminately. There are few who oppose "peace." Pacifism is a different matter. It normally means only one thing: the conscientious rejection of military force as an instrument of personal or national self-defense. It is, of course, an extremist stance: in its political hazards, in its stress on individual conscience and in its uncompromising refusal to make use of dubious means to achieve even good ends. As a result, few men are now or ever have been pacifists. Neither the churches nor the nations through the centuries have been supporters of pacifism; at most it has been tolerated. Those who take the pacifist course can usually expect public scorn, even when they are lucky enough to live in a nation which makes a legal place for their scruples. Inevitably, it seems, the general public looks upon pacifists as shirkers and cowards. Apart from an occasional high-level defense of pacifism as a moral option for some people, the churches do little to persuade the public otherwise.

The Second Vatican Council took a few tentative steps to enhance the stance of the pacifist. In "The Church in the Modern World," the Council Fathers praised "those who renounce the use of violence in the vindication of their rights and who resort to methods of defense which are otherwise available to weaker parties too, provided that this can be done without injury to the rights and duties of others or of the community itself." This is hardly an unambiguous statement, much less a strong manifesto in support of the pacifist. But there is at least no suggestion that the pacifist is a moral weakling, fearful to take up the duties of citizenship.

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In any case, a Catholic might hope that a Pope would be willing to go as far as the Council in support of pacifists. Or, if that is too much to expect, that a Pope might at least refrain from casting pacifists in the worst possible light. Apparently, such minimal hopes—of the vicar of the Prince of Peace—are, for the moment, in vain. In his call for a "Day of Peace" the Bishop of Rome expressed the hope "that the exaltation of the ideal of peace may not favor the cowardice of those who fear it may be their duty to give their life for the service of their own country and of their own brothers. . . . Peace is not pacifism; it does not mask a base and slothful concept of life. . ."

We use the phrase "the Bishop of Rome" deliberately in referring to the author of those words. They are unworthy of a Pope. Rather than enlightening the world on the rights of conscience, they serve only to perpetuate the all-too-popular jingoist's version of the pacifist. Does the Pope really mean to suggest that pacifism masks a "base and slothful concept of life"? Probably not; he couldn't. Could he?

It is painful to even imagine that he could. Painful because the Church is only now beginning to show that the personal conscience counts. Painful because the world is becoming more sensitive to the false uses of the word peace, especially those uses which equate peace with nationalistic triumphs. Painful because Christianity has helped keep alive a tension between the private conscience and political realities. On each of these counts, the Pope's statement represents a setback.

Worse still, one is led to wonder why the Pope felt called upon to imply, at this moment, the worst about pacifism. The only country in the world where it could now be called a "problem" is in the United States, and that very much because of the Vietnamese war. Could some one or other have influenced the Pope to say a few antipacifist words? We hate to think this could have happened. The number of pacifists in this country is still miniscule; the effect of pacifist sentiment upon the course of the war has been infinitesimal. If there is any "problem" about pacifism, it is that so few consider it a possibility.

We have considered pacifism, and we have rejected it. But it stands before us as a living moral option and should so stand before others. We hope the Pope has not uttered his last words on pacifism, and that he will say something better in the future. One way or the other, though, the conscience of the pacifist has its own intrinsic validity; it does not, fortunately, depend upon papal validation. Let that conscience be respected.

WHITTLING CHAMBERS

The dominant features of the first session of the 90th Congress were the war, an increasingly aging and incompetent leadership, the Administration's functional withdrawal from domestic concerns and the development of a loyal opposition far more loyal than in opposition. Led by stalwarts like Rep. McCormack of Massachusetts, the nominally Democratic majority was unable to provide a cohesive and programmatic session and was outmaneuvered repeatedly and frustrated by economy-minded conservatives who, with an eye on the war, were more effective than usual in dampening domestic welfare provisions. For a time it appeared as though the entire anti-poverty program would be knifed into oblivion: Shriver gave notice even before the debating ended that he would retire if his OEO were sufficiently eviscerated. The fact that he has not yet retired probably has more to do with his own tenacity than to a revived anti-poverty program, since with an appropriation of only $1.77 billion the war on poverty will continue on as a mere skirmish.

More attentive to the war which got $32 billion than to what has come to be called our domestic upheaval, the Administration seemingly abandoned Congress to its own devices, having abdicated to the economizers and the conservative Democrats whom Mr. Johnson seemingly has lost interest even in co-opting. Hence the old Northern Republican-Southern Democrat coalition has reemerged, and with it a majority on many important issues. While the space agency got $4.6 billion, the anti-poverty program was slashed by $387 million from the Administration's request, and $207 million from that which Congress itself authorized; foreign aid, which this year received $2.3 billion, is $1 billion less than requested, and the lowest appropriation in its 20-year history. In fact, the White House put on a jubilant face to announce "success" this year merely because Congress did not kill the Great Society altogether as was feared.

There was the usual run of Congressional Keystone Kops routines, but the 90th Congress distinguished itself by laughing down a bill to exterminate rats in the cities, and by keeping Adam Powell from his seat, thereby demonstrating to a growing population of restive and militant blacks an abiding interest in insuring that Harlem would go unrepresented another year. Perhaps to show their humanity the two Houses passed a law barring discrimination against workers over 40.

However, as the New York *Times* took pains to demonstrate, "this is not the age of Calvin Coolidge," when Congress could afford to be unconcerned about its responsibilities as it has been in the year of Newark and Detroit, and in the year when the poorer nations became poorer relative to the rich and even less able to keep pace with rapidly rising populations. This blitheness toward the nation's and the world's poor may not be solely the result of the doings in Vietnam, but Congress has shown that the country is not ready to deal with both problems, so the budget returned to Paul Samuelson's guns or butter reckoning despite manifest economic evidence that we could afford both.

While the Administration let Congress go its own way into reaction, however, unintended consequences resulted

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which augur well for a resurgence of Congressional initiative. It imposed restrictions on arms sales abroad, and moved to reestablish something approaching parity with the Executive in foreign affairs. The intensity of Congressional opposition to the war has put Mr. Johnson on notice that for the present at least "more Vietnams" will not be countenanced. And despite the President's warning that he would not be influenced by the dissenters, Congressional dissent grew from a handful of loners to a chorus that has given Republican stalwarts like Senator Dirksen the chance for greater flexibility that could presage an exploitable split with the Administration. All of which could be used to put a peace-minded candidate into office next November.

A NEW REVOLUTION?

Peace on earth to men of good will. Fat chance. Now, at year's end, peace seems painfully remote and good will eroded in a national atmosphere gone ugly, with hawks and doves clawing at each other. As the cost of the war rises, in casualties in Vietnam and dissension at home, there is a deepening frustration, a sense of being trapped, that did not exist last year at this time. Then there was the stubborn hope, even in the face of contrary indications, that we would get lucky: the NLF and Hanoi would give up or, to put it more politely, would agree to negotiate, and we could withdraw from an impossible situation with our honor more or less intact. Few are that sanguine at the close of 1967.

There is a mood of desperation in the United States that is as evident among hawks as doves and, more ominously, among the people in between, all of whom betray increasing signs of the notorious American impatience with inconclusiveness. Supporters of the war and many who are simply fed up with it but dislike being numbered among the outright dissenters, say: step up the bombing (why *not* hit the dikes?), invade the North, pull out all stops and get it over with.

The dissenters, in their own way, are similarly desperate. Lacking power to command the national power, they try to interfere with its exercise: at induction centers, military bases, war industries. They favor civil disobedience; they take to the streets in ever-larger demonstrations. As each one fails or takes unpredictable directions, their sense of powerlessness is heightened, the mood of bitterness becomes heavier, the voices calling for violent protest grow more strident.

More and more, one hears the despairing remark that we are destroying not only Vietnam in this war, but also ourselves. That lament raises a larger question about America, of which the war in Vietnam is only a part. It is this: what kind of nation has the United States become? One war dissenter and civil rights leader who has consistently raised this larger question has again brought it into focus as a result of a recent symbolic gesture of protest. Father Philip Berrigan and three friends poured blood on draft records in Baltimore's Customs House. They had intended the blood to be their own, but the equipment for drawing it broke down and at the last minute they added duck's blood. The admixture repelled many who would otherwise have been sympathetic. It seemed to flaw the gesture's symbolism and make it grotesque. Nevertheless, now free on bail, awaiting trial in January, Father Berrigan in speaking to various groups manages to go beyond the content and circumstances of his gesture and to confront the overarching issue of American power and wealth.

The United States, Berrigan points out, owns literally half the world's gross national product. We control 60 percent of the French electronics industry, dominate European car manufacture and huge segments of Latin American resources, own upwards of 30 percent of Indian rupees, according to some estimates, and everywhere, from Canada to Japan, our business investments make America an imposing presence. How is it, Berrigan asks, that a nation so rich cannot afford a well-paid volunteer army? Why must reluctant young men, especially the poor who cannot afford student deferments, be pressed into fighting an unpopular war? And, beyond the war, how is it with all our wealth and technological genius, America has festering ghettos of destitution in the cities and an army of rural poor starving in the outlands, without even the energy to riot?

Father Berrigan says that America needs a revolution every 25 years, not an original observation, but at the moment very much to the point. Wars like the one in Vietnam are made to serve as substitutes for the revolution required at home. The military-industrial-government complex that controls American power abroad and increasingly at home is thus left in undisputed control. This is what should be debated in the coming year, not just the war in Vietnam, but what it signifies about the kind of nation America has become at home and in the world.

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King and Junta: The Coup That Failed

The lightning failure of King Constantine's belated attempt to depose the Greek junta does not mean that the latter has won the support of the Greek people. Rather, it means that it has used its 35 weeks of power to make its control of the armed forces so solid, through purges and new appointments to key posts, that it has been able to withstand even the effects of the Cyprus crisis. Undoubtedly the King hoped to use the resentment of many military men toward the junta for leading them up the hill and down again in the drive for *enosis*. But however widespread that resentment was in the armed forces, the junta had the

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loyalty of thousands of newly appointed or promoted officers. Had the King resisted on April 21, the armed forces would have followed him and the coup would have collapsed. After nine months of acquiescence, he had lost his power to act effectively.

Perhaps he could still have won out if he had placed himself at the head of a broadly-based movement of all forces opposed to the junta. But he does not appear to have sought for allies outside the circles of the traditional Right; while the majority of Greeks who had supported the Center and Left certainly regarded the King as preferable to the junta, he made no attempt to mobilize them. Indeed, many of his actions were such as to dispel any popular enthusiasm for his cause. In his proclamation he not only rejected any alliance with "Communists"—a term which his friends have in the past applied with a generosity comparable to that of Robert Welch—he also indicated support for the planned imposition of a new constitution in place of the one he was sworn to uphold. And Petros Garoufalias, whom he designated as Prime Minister, had as Defense Minister precipitated the crisis of July, 1965, by his insistence on taking orders from the King rather than from Premier George Papandreous and his refusal to surrender his office when Papandreous dismissed him. One wonders how many democratic Greeks would have been anxious to die for Garoufalias.

Under the circumstances, the junta might still have fallen had the United States—which justified its acceptance of the April coup on the ground that the King's continued presence preserved the government's legal continuity—announced that it was withdrawing recognition from the dictatorship. (There can be little doubt that the King consulted the United States before he moved; he has always done so in the past.) But Washington did nothing.

The King's defeat seems likely to be followed by a wave of repression against the traditional Right, comparable to that which the Center has already experienced. The elevation of Colonel George Papadopoulos to the post of Prime Minister is certainly not reassuring, but is perhaps less significant than it seems at first glance. Under a decree requiring all Ministries to report to him and accept his guidance on questions of policy, he has been in effective control since August. Now he may feel a little freer to pursue his own goals, but the principal restraint on him remains now, as before, the need to preserve the unity of the junta. For one may doubt if he is as yet strong enough to dispense with its other members and substitute a personal for a collective dictatorship, though his status as first among not-so-very equals is clear.

Some concern has been expressed that the removal of the King and the elevation of Papadopoulos might cause the Cyprus agreement to become unstuck, since Papadopoulos was largely responsible for the junta's drive for instant *enosis*. This seems unlikely. Greece's capitulation on the Cyprus issue was the result not of domestic but of international factors; these have not changed, except to the junta's disadvantage. Turkey's military superiority is even more overwhelming than before, as a result of the renewed purge of royalist officers in Greece. Greek Cypriot enthusiasm for *enosis,* already slight, can only have been reduced still further. Cyprus remains as near as ever to the Turkish coast and as far from the Greek. And the junta can hardly expect United States intervention to rescue it from the disasters which would follow its repudiation of an agreement reached under U.S. sponsorship.

For the moment, the events of recent days have certainly consolidated the position of the junta. There does not seem to be any force on the horizon capable of overthrowing it in the next several months if it maintains its unity. At the same time, its political base is now even narrower than before, and hence the possibility of building an effective democratic opposition is greater. Many who held to the illusion that democracy would be restored by royal fiat without any action on their part may now commit themselves to active opposition. This may develop on a larger scale if the impending economic crisis forces the regime to adopt increasingly unpopular policies.

Internationally also, the regime's isolation has been increased, a fact which may be expected to increase its economic problems, as well as its political ones. Thus British Prime Minister Wilson has told Parliament that the King's flight puts Britain's diplomatic relations with Greece in question. For Britain, and probably for a number of other nations as well, the determining factor is likely to be the course followed by the United States. So far this country has withheld recognition of the Papadopoulos regime, but its policy remains in doubt. Washington's rationalizations for continuing not only diplomatic recognition but military aid were largely based on the continued presence of the King. Now that he is gone, it remains to be seen whether a new set will be found. Withdrawal of American aid and recognition might not have a decisive effect on the immediate situation in Greece. But it would certainly hinder the regime's efforts to entrench itself still further, and would increase the likelihood of its early overthrow. Above all, it would give some firm indication to a skeptical world that the United States is still capable of indignation at a tyranny whose flag is not red.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

(Maurice J. Goldbloom, labor information officer in 1950-51 of the U.S. Economic Mission to Greece, has visited there several times since, most recently in May and June.)

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

In accordance with growing magazine practice, Commonweal omits one issue over the year-end Holidays. The next issue will be that dated January 12. To all our readers, our very best wishes for the Christmas season.

THE EDITORS

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THE WEEK THAT WAS

AN AMERICAN FANTASY

New York

Viewed from a middle distance, or from an angle of ironic detachment, the week of Dec. 4-8 must have seemed very odd, bizarrely American. The Cardinal lay in state in the Cathedral, while at various points to the south, day after day, antiwar demonstrators gathered in the pre-dawn chill with the proclaimed intention of disrupting social harmony, starting with the even tenor of the draft—only to face the massed phalanxes of immovable police who would later, day after day, chase their adversaries through the streets and finally, tiring of the pretense, bring the issue to a bloody resolution, in the immemorial way of the police. In the Senate, Fulbright and Dodd (allegorically, Day and Night) regarded each other with melancholy miens; and out in the pasture the Vice President flung his master's challenge at the pretender's feet while the latter juggled the opportunity by cautiously venturing a frail if decent idea or two which did not, predictably, interest anyone, in any camp. Humphrey, as usual, was in strong if strident voice; and with the passing of each day McCarthy, who still talks of "enclaves" and "pacification," seemed more terribly alone. Meanwhile, the President, who is above politics, girded up his loins like a man, preparing himself, not to lose a daughter, but to gain a son. All in all, the mists of fantasy hung heavy over the week in which the Whitehall Street induction center was to be closed down, just like that.

Viewed close up, the American comedy shaded into another, and grimmer, genre. The immediate background of "Stop the Draft" week must be held in mind. McNamara's imminent departure was announced. No one saw the decision as anything but an ouster, or a resignation—an ominous one, many Johnsonologists thought, signifying a possible, indeed a likely, intensification and widening of the war. (Shouldn't the peace movement abandon the use of such terms as "escalation" and "involvement"—one a bureaucratic euphemism for incremental horror; the other an absurd and obscene evasion?) Moreover, draft chief Lewis Hershey had just issued his notorious directive ("memorandum," or rather, "recommendation"—another jot added to the general debasement of language and morals; after all, Hershey himself informed the nation, with a hurt expression, that he is empowered only to advise, not to command) instructing (let us say) all local draft boards to impress and shanghai (let us say) all dissenters of vulnerable age; and the President's advisory commission on these things had just declared calculus and solid-state physics to be in the national interest, but not the study of sprung rhythm in pre-Raphaelite poetry or Old Norse. And furthermore, in the remote dirty war which corrupts us all, there had been a certain restlessness on the borders of adjoining states, against which, it was felt, forays are in the offing, or now underway.

In this context, the week unfolded. The atmosphere held nothing of the grandeur of the October March on the Pentagon—no immense throngs, no air of jubilation and high drama, no green fields, blue skies, soft breezes. Instead, the squalor of the city on a workday: token forces of protestors exceeded in number (or so it seemed) by the police; unsympathetic weather; hostile passersby on their way to work; and the evitable gorillas, red-faced and burly, the hecklers who prowled the sidewalks abreast the demonstrators, snarling obscenities and threats and gallantly extending indecent invitations to the girls when they were not gladdening the morning with their elegant wit "Take a bath. Got some pot? They oughta ship all of you to Veetnam. They'd make a man outayuh there." The faces and manner and language are always the same—Birmingham, Selma, Oakland, New Orleans, New York.

The demonstrators, herded ignominiously into corrals of police cordons, were soon dispirited. Early on, those who sat down in proscribed areas, thereby committing civil disobedience, were arrested—hundreds hauled off in police vans, among them some celebrated dissenters including Benjamin Spock, Conor Cruise O'Brien, Susan Sontag, Grace Paley. The rest cheered and waved their support, and continued hour after hour to mill about in the narrow confines permitted them by the grace of the City of New York.

As the morning, and later the week, wore on, a weariness settled in—and, more than that, a kind of despair, as if the week was too long a time. In fact it is not frivolous to say the week lacked dramatic form, a sense of acceleration and progressive heightening—of an historic event moving with increasing velocity through ascending stages of expressive significance—which, I hope, is a way of saying that the antiwar movement manifested great heart and soul, but a limited perspective of strategy and tactics.

In part, perhaps, the sense of being thwarted was a matter of numbers: in a middle-class, essentially genteel revolution, it seems easy enough to persuade thousands of people to travel long distances at considerable expense in order to confront monuments of sculpture and architecture—the symbolism is attractive, and highly educated people respond with full hearts to attractive symbolism; but not nearly so easy to rout them out of bed in the middle of the night for a subway trip to a dank and gloomy section of the city—the dismal, unpleasant, disheartening, necessary work of a mass movement. Yet, in all fairness, having taken to the streets with the announced in-

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tention of "closing" the induction center, what is a group of demonstrators then to do? There they were by the dawn's early light—and so were armies of police, fortified by hot coffee provided by the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association. What next? The arrests followed. All right—what now? what next? Some of the kids talked with foolish ardor as if Manhattan were Petersburg, 1917; Havana, 1960; indeed Manhattan of the 1863 draft riots. Well, it isn't, as they learned the hard way. So what happens next?

The inevitable. What happened is what happens in Manhattan, 1967-68. Mass arrests continued throughout the week—including some police "mistakes," owing to a failure of communication, Headquarters said, by way of apology. There was even some talk of bringing suit for false arrest. By the end of the week, having run out of other symbols, a column of demonstrators broke away from the main body (the term implies a coherence that was by this time absent in actuality) and descended, brandishing signs, upon an obscure military building at Irving Place. In a representative action, a slender girl, at 15 small for her age, is said to have savagely, brutally, implacably attacked a police brigade; whereupon the sore-tried friendly neighborhood cops, having long since had their fill of the democratic process, really opened up. The usually serene New York *Times* reported that "blood splattered the sidewalk" as the "flying wedge of policemen sent the crowd reeling back in disorder"; that "youths were flung against the iron fence" and ordered to stand spread-eagled while plainclothesmen searched them; and that one youth was dragged by the hair across the street and thrown into a police van. An Army geologist who witnessed the scene from within the building denounced the police action as "the most disgusting thing I've ever seen." ". . . at least one-third of these kids were girls," he said. "What the police did was un-American, unchivalrous and disgusting." Within hours, the *Times* reported the following day, his security clearance was lifted pending possible further action. (It was finally restored.)

The surreal week ended in fitting fashion. On Friday it ended most bloodily. On Saturday, the President staged in the White House his own symbolic action by giving his elder daughter in marriage to a professional soldier who will soon depart for Vietnam—barring a sudden change-of-heart and a decision to picket the Pentagon instead, even if he must risk jail. In Renaissance drama, after the descent of chaos and old night, the moral and social order is at length restored by the magical intervention of the *deus ex machina.* The Prince arrives, glances smilingly about, issues commands; equilibrium is reestablished. In comedy, there is a marriage of true minds and general merriment: there will be a crop next year; in tragedy, the ruins will be salvaged, life will go on, civil peace will reign. Now there is no Prince, no Fortinbras, no moral order, no civil peace; nor can there be while this hideous war goes on. In the meantime, the disorderly kids who take to the streets are just about all we have to remind us of the eventual possibility of order. SAUL MALOFF

(Saul Maloff's latest novel, Happy Families, *will be published next spring by Scribners.)*

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SENATOR EUGENE McCARTHY

A MAN FOR THIS SEASON?

The New Left is fond of lumping all liberals—from Albert Camus to Charles Engelhardt—in the same pot, carelessly labeled Enemy. But liberalism has as many shaded strands as radicalism, and it is my purpose in this piece to try and locate Senator Eugene McCarthy more exactly within the broad post-New Deal tradition of liberalism.

McCarthy, for example, has never been a populist muckraker against monopoly interests like Estes Kefauver or Paul Douglas. He has voted to protect the oil depletion allowance, and he has voted against reforms aimed at the drug industry monopolies. McCarthy also has never displayed the strong working class and minority group passions that have distinguished Hubert Humphrey and Walter Reuther.

Instead, McCarthy's brand of liberalism seems to have two characteristic elements. An essentially ethical and philosophical opposition to unjust authority, absorbed from the liberal theological tradition of Sir Thomas More, St. Thomas Aquinas and Jacques Maritain. And a cultivated, patrician, somewhat abstract sensibility, associated with Adlai Stevenson. It is more than symbolic that a plaster plaque of Sir Thomas More hangs on a wall in McCarthy's otherwise spare Washington office, and that his most remembered public act was his nominating speech for Adlai Stevenson at the 1960 Democratic convention.

The most impressive moments of McCarthy's political career have come when he rebelled against a powerful authority he viewed as a menace to his notion of morality and common decency. The first revolt came in 1952, when he was one of the first and few liberal politicians to publicly attack, at the zenith of his power, the late Joe McCarthy. He effectively debated his namesake twice on television, and spoke out often, in prophetic cadences against the contagion of anti-Communist hysteria. That year Eugene McCarthy led the unsuccessful fight in the House to amend a HUAC-sponsored bill, to permit alleged security risks to retain "non-sensitive government jobs." In 1960, Mc-

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Carthy, appalled at the "lavishness and ruthlessness" of the Kennedy nomination juggernaut, got up and nominated Stevenson, knowing it was a gesture of futile purity, destined to stamp him an exile for the duration of the New Frontier.

Ever since the Bay of Pigs invasion, McCarthy, more than any other Senator, has made the supervision and restriction of the power of the CIA his personal issue, speaking and writing about it long before the *Ramparts* exposé made it a fashionable, almost chic cause. And although he was not the earliest, or the most persistent critic of the Vietnam escalation, McCarthy has transcended all the conventions of politics, by mounting his current challenge to an incumbent President of his own party—and characteristically framing it in moral terms, as Sir Thomas and Ambassador Stevenson would have done.

Although two recent and penetrating biographies (by Herbert J. Muller and Kenneth S. Davis) have begun to institutionalize a Stevenson mythology, I have never been much moved by the man McCarthy termed "a prophet" in his 1960 nominating speech. And it is not only for his poetic rationales for the exclusion of China from the UN, for the Bay of Pigs invasion, for the Dominican intervention, for the Vietnam escalation, that I do not honor Stevenson as a prophet, but also because of his public record on Negroes as a presidential candidate.

It was Stevenson, after all, who anointed segregationist John Sparkman as his running mate in 1952. And it was Stevenson, who said in 1956, during the Montgomery bus boycott, and in defense of racial moderation, that "anti-Southernism is as bad as anti-Negroism." And Irving Howe perceptively pointed out in *Steady Work* that, "in domestic policy Truman was, if anything, slightly to the left of Stevenson."

It is this same blind spot toward the Invisible Man that McCarthy seems to share with his hero. There are, of course, dozens of distressing votes on minor civil rights amendments in McCarthy's voting record. But there is also one dramatic negative vote; in May of 1965 it was McCarthy's vote that sent the anti-poll tax amendment down to defeat. (See James Wechsler's *New York Post* column, May 12, 1965.) Why the Senator from Minnesota cast his lot that sad day with Everett Dirksen and Russell Long instead of with Joe Clark and Edward Kennedy remains an enigma.

Beyond that, McCarthy almost never speaks about the Negro underclass or their current euphemism, "the urban crisis." In October of 1960, *after* Little Rock and *after* the sit-ins, McCarthy published a good, gray book called *Frontiers of Democracy*. The volume contained whole chapters on such vague subjects as "Innocence" and "Morality in Government," but none on civil rights. Whether McCarthy, who is now 51, recognizes how desperately the black poor need to be proud of their blackness, or whether he favors a more dignifying alternative to the family-destroying welfare bureaucracy, or whether he considers it crucial that the poor control the local anti-poverty programs, the existing public record does not seem to show.

One reads through his four books, his recent speeches and the recent volumes of the congressional record searching in vain for some sign from the Senator of genuine emotional sympathy with the wretched of the American earth. This sign comes from such Senators as Fred Harris of very un-Negro Oklahoma, and even from Republicans like Mayor John Lindsay and Jacob Javits. They make it their business to see and visit those wounded children of Malcolm X who brood in the limbo between school, work and the army. But McCarthy seems moved mostly by abstract, intellectual issues like foreign policy, ethics, and civil liberties—rather than those gut issues one can only learn about from life experience. Even when he speaks about Vietnam, McCarthy puts his emphasis on the Senate's losing its policy-making initiative, or the absence of a coherent policy objective in Asia. Others, meanwhile, speak about the sight of napalm on flesh, or the weeping of two million homeless refugees.

Since I would regard Lyndon Johnson's renomination and re-election as a national tragedy, and I still retain faith in the electoral process, I am solidly "for" McCarthy, and without illusions. I would, however, have preferred Robert Kennedy or Mayor John Lindsay as alternatives, since I think they (along with Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh, Julian Bond, Allard Lowenstein and others) are working toward a new, post-Stevensonian conception of liberalism. This "new liberalism" I would define as more urban, more activist, more experimental than the old. Decentralist rather than bureaucratic, as evidenced by Lindsay's new school plan drafted by the Bundy Committee, and Kennedy's restoration project in Bedford-Stuyvesant. More geared toward the non-working poor than the fat, belching unions. More interested in sympathizing with the unborn revolutions of the Third World, than in containment or NATO. And less hung up on the anti-Communism of the 1950's generation traumatized by Joe Stalin and Joe McCarthy.

I attended the recent Conference of Concerned Democrats in Chicago as a pro-McCarthy delegate. Yet, when I returned to New York and a friend, who is active full-time in the draft resistance movement, asked me whether he should now volunteer for the McCarthy campaign, I could not in clear conscience answer with a simple "yes." I was too ambivalent. Maybe his route will still prove more effective in stopping the war, as it did in Algeria. I could not be sure that McCarthy's Tory liberalism made him the man for *this* season of war, riot and despair. So I told my SDS friend that we should each do our own thing for a while. Only the issues McCarthy creates, and the speeches he delivers, will finally determine whether my friend will be canvassing in Boston next March, or whether I will be demonstrating in Chicago next August. JACK NEWFIELD

(Jack Newfield is assistant editor of The Village Voice.*)*

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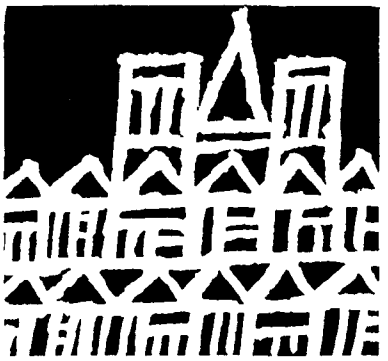

POLITICS AND THE SACRED

City on the hill, dung of the earth

TERRY EAGLETON

I want in this article to look briefly at the concept of the "sacred," and particularly at what seems to be an intrinsic ambivalence which it contains. The purpose in doing this will not simply be to make a theological point, but to relate what we can learn about the "sacred" to the role and behavior of the Christian church in the world.

In *Toward a Contemporary Christianity*, Brian Wicker draws on the work of Gerard van der Leeuw and Mircea Eliade to make the point that the primitive conception of the sacred is of an area more, not less, "real" than the "profane."

To the primitive mind, the activity of sacralization, of making sacred, involves the wrestling of intelligible order from the profanity of chaos. Man's sharing in the sacred, in the power of the gods, is the source of that capacity to structure his world into an order of articulate meaning which is the distinctive mark of his humanity. To cross the defining limits of the sacred is therefore to pass from the significant to the absurd: it is to project oneself beyond the creative definitions of humanity into the chaotic unreality which lies beyond them.

Wicker's intention is to draw a parallel between this primitive version of experience and the insights of modern thinkers like Marx, Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty. In the work of these three philosophers, the idea that man's distinctive humanity rests in a power to create and inhabit an articulate world of meaning, to shape from natural chaos a shared order recognizable by him as *his* order and imbued with his significances, is a constant factor. Implicit in all these versions of reality, as in the primitive notion of sacralization, is an assumption that what creates man as authentically human is an option to move within, not beyond, a common structure of meaning. It is through his participation in this common order that man achieves identity. Just as a surpassing of the limits of sacred order means a loss of authentic selfhood for the primitive mind, so for Wittgenstein the notion that man can opt out of a public language is a similar illusion. There can be no private language. Man makes his personal experience intelligible to himself only insofar as he inhabits a public order of meaning, a common language. For Marx, man can pervert into private self-advancement his power to define through work a world in common with others only at the cost of self-enslavement. The capitalist who alienates others through his own acquisitiveness is himself estranged from his own species-being, from his truest identity as a participating member of a common world. For Merleau-Ponty, man's personal being is constituted by his bodiliness, by his physical dialogue with objects and other bodies. To opt out of this world is to detach himself from his own body, to become a schizophrenic.

Authentic humanity, then, involves movement within a created world of meaning—within the confines of the order which man generates by his body, work and language, by all the modes of his personal and political presence to others. Man exists as man by moving within limits, but it is only through the distortions of a Western liberal tradition that these limits could be seen as restrictive. On the contrary, they are what *constitute* man as man, the creative definitions which release him into human freedom. For man to extend himself beyond these communal limits—to sin—is to reject authentic humanity for a freedom which is no freedom, an absurd liberation from definition which reduces him to nothing.

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Shakespeare's *Macbeth* seems to me to be a play which is largely about this problem of freedom and limitation, being and nothingness, and it is worth discussing it briefly here to underline the point. In the play, Lady Macbeth is an existentialist who believes that man can go further and further in defining himself, without limit; Macbeth himself recognizes that there are certain apparent forms of human self-extension which result ironically in enslavement and illusion, certain actions which by overreaching a frontier fall back into zero: "o'erleap themselves, and fall on th' other." Macbeth sees that the moving definitions which constitute human community are creative, not restrictive: "I dare do all that may become a man;/ Who dares do more is none."

When man overreaches himself he brings others and himself to nothing, to the condition of objects or corpses. This truth is brought out in the play by the fact that Macbeth's life is so wedded to Duncan's—who, as king, is the embodiment of community-life—that the murder of Duncan is an act of self-destruction, a form of schizophrenia. By projecting himself beyond the limits of his own species-life, and thus beyond community, Macbeth plunges into the profane dark which waits at the edges of the created human world, the dark beyond all intelligible definition which is symbolized in the play by the three witches, who do "a deed without a name," inhabiting a realm beyond language, social role, relationship. To move beyond community is to catapult beyond language and social function, beyond the basic constituents of human society. Evil in the play is precisely that chaotic region beyond the creative bounds of human community in which all articulation is negative and absurd, in which the significant definitions of human life are dissolved into serialized and arbitrary experience. Fair is foul and foul is fair, nothing is but what is not.

One of the central images which Shakespeare uses in *Macbeth* to suggest a resolution of this diseased condition is that of the banquet. In later plays, he alternates or combines this image with that of the dance. In the meal, as in the dance, human interpersonal presence is negotiated through and in terms of the material world, of food and the body: these elements become the language by which this presence is structured. This of course is also the traditional imagery of Christianity. Christ is the food, and the body, which is given to us as the form of our interpersonal presence, resolving our bodies into a single life and creating an area of meaning within which individuals can achieve identity within the shared world of the liturgical assembly. To refuse this communal order of meaning, to step outside the fertile limits which the structure of Christ's presence imposes, would be to sin. It would be, as with Macbeth, to overreach the language of authentic humanity—the word of God—for the inarticulate negativity of the profane.

So far, the argument has seemed to suggest that entry into the sacred involves participation in the construction of a world of common meaning: establishing, through our bodily, linguistic and productive activity, an order of shared significance. For the Christian, of course, the liturgical life is not an oasis of authentic meaning inserted into an obscure surge of chaos, but an expressive sign of the intrinsic sacrality of the redeemed world. The distinction is not between temple and foreigner, but between universally available grace and sin. For the Christian, as Wicker has emphasized, grace consists not in the building of a special universe but simply in sharing in the construction of human community: in, in the broadest sense, politics.

What is notable about this interpretation of the sacred is that it aligns the Christian with the Marxist or radical humanist rather than with the liberal or religious thinker. For what Christian and radical share in common is a belief that articulated human structures are not accidental to man, but the language of his humanity: not secondary to individual or "spiritual" life, but the basic constituents of that life, shaping the arena of man's redemption. The sacred consists, not in an order which opposes human institutions in the name of a greater transcendence, but in a range of meaning which is itself only realized through "political" activity, in the creation of a common culture. The sacred, that is to say, is inherently *institutional*: it is what defines and articulates human living, not what lies in the darkness beyond and between social structures.

At this point, however, it is important to notice a primitive response to the sacred which seems at first sight to contradict what we have said. Mary Douglas, in her recent work, *Purity and Danger*, an anthropological study of taboos relating to dirt in primitive societies, argues that dirt may be assigned a potent and sacred force by these societies precisely because it symbolizes that chaotic, unstructured life which lies outside, or in the interstices of, articulated social forms: "Dirt offends against order . . . Uncleanness or dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained . . . Eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment . . . ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience . . . Reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death."

Dirt, as disorganized matter resistant to social categories and labeling, represents a potent threat to any political structure, and this power may be associated with the force of the sacred. It signifies a pervasive, unnamable form of life, amorphous and undefined, which is dangerous precisely because it cannot easily be reduced to intelligibility. As such, it represents a potential *reductio ad absurdum* of the laboriously fashioned structures of human society, exposing by negation their points of weakness, and forcing them into elaborately defensive rationalizations.

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It is part of man's sharing in the sacred to make such rationalizations, as Wicker points out: "The fundamental demand of the religious man is to make everything real, to put everything in its right place, to banish insecurity and evanescence and decay, and to prevent that sliding back into chaos which is the tendency of every unconsecrated thing in the world."

This sense of a "sliding back into chaos" is not merely a function of the primitive mind; we can find recent literary illustrations of this world-view, to counterpoint the emphasis we noted in *Macbeth*. Pope's *Dunciad* is shot through with the sense of a tendency in Nature to wind down into a primeval chaos out of which human, social order has been precariously salvaged. Dickens' later novels—*Bleak House* and *Our Mutual Friend* in particular—are obsessed with a residual, all-pervasive slime, dust or fog which invades the crevices of institutional society, threatening to dissolve it back into nameless sludge (Krook in *Bleak House* is actually reduced by spontaneous combustion to a pool of slime). George Orwell's Winston Smith is seen at the beginning of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* "slipp(ing) quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, although not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him." The gritty dust symbolizes all that remains of the cultural traditions which Smith's society has successfully obliterated.

To the primitive mind, as Mary Douglas points out, the intricately wrought social structures which define man's existence are expressions of sacred power, and the function of this power is partly to keep at bay the encroachments of dirt and chaos, of the forces which dissolve definition into absurdity. The pressures on society are felt most, according to Mrs. Douglas, at its "margins and boundaries"—at the inherently ambiguous points, the gaps and interstices in its structure where it blends into chaos. To preserve the defining contours, rules and taboos are systematized to categorize experience which falls along these margins.

Yet the ambivalence in the concept of the sacred lies in the fact that these weak and inarticulated points in the structure are felt to have a potent and dangerous dynamic which is oddly similar to that power which sustains the structure. The external forces represent "powers inhering in the cosmos," as much as those which are institutionalized. Any social structure is thus an encounter of two powers, one incarnated in the system, one infiltrating its carefully hedged meanings. This second power is most obvious in the margins of society, the areas immediately beyond its formal limits: in some initiation ceremonies, "to say that the boys risk their lives says precisely that to go out of the formal structure and to enter the margins is to be exposed to power that is enough to kill them or make their manhood." The non-institutionalized power which laps up against the edges of society is both destructive and creative. It questions and threatens the structures, and yet, if it can be encountered unflinchingly, can be carried back into them in a movement of renewal. "That which is rejected is ploughed back for a renewal of life."

The fact that dirt—what is by definition beyond system—can be felt as sacred is seen in the fact that "religions often sacralize the very unclean things which have been rejected with abhorrence." Again, dirt which is destructive can become somehow creative: the very forces which tend to the dissolution of society into shapeless slime can become enshrined as holy.

There seem to be three possible explanations for this. First, dirt is dangerous when it is still in a state of half-decay, and therefore a confusion of categories; but when it has returned to pure formlessness it may symbolize a purification of life, a primeval formlessness from which all life is molded. Secondly, the powers which assault the vulnerable margins of society can act, by a kind of negative symbolism, as a positive reminder of the fragility of the articulated structures. Thirdly, the sacralization of the unclean and rejected can be seen as an embracing, and partial disarming, of death. Dirt and death are connected both literally—in the imagery of corpses and dung—and metaphysically, as the ultimate reversals of social structures, the fundamentally unstructured and uncontrollable regions beyond them. By bringing this reality in ritual form within the structures themselves, a partial synthesis of the two forms of the sacred—the positive structure, and its insistent negation—is achieved: "When someone embraces freely the symbols of death (in primitive society)," Mrs. Douglas writes, ". . . a great release of power for good should be expected to follow."

The Paradox of the Sacred

It seems, then, that the notion of the sacred for the primitive mind holds a fundamental paradox. The sacred is a power released and defined in human institutions, the linch-pins of their force; yet there is a related power which reveals itself in the edges and crevices of these structures, determined to undermine them into its own fluidity. This region, as we saw it in *Macbeth*, was the area of evil, the eternally unintelligible and unreclaimed order beyond authentic meaning. Yet such a view will not wholly do, on this later evidence. For this hostile power is also, in a sense, good: its destructiveness can be seen as creative. It is this paradox that I want now to examine in terms of Christianity.

One could, to begin with, draw a general connection between this ambivalence in the primitive notion of the sacred and the Christian perspective on the relations between any social order and the power of God. The power of the Spirit is the structure of social order, the ground of personal and political presence, yet it also transcends this. Like the water of baptism or the hostile forces of primitive society, it is also the primordial formlessness

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which is the source of all human structuring, exhausted by no single crystallization, present as the pressure of what is still potential, of what remains to be. Yet this, while true as it stands, is clearly too static a formulation. The point about Christianity is that it locates this ambivalence in the sacred *historically*. It grasps it, not as a model of an eternally true relation between God and human society, but rather as a description of human political history.

For the New Testament, as for the primitive mind, the sacred realizes itself both in the structured and in the wholly unstructured, in elaborate system and in that which no system can hold. For the Christian, the presence of the sacred in the world takes two major forms. Christ is present in that articulated structure of signs which we call the church. He is also present, more fundamentally, in the oppressed and exploited. These men—the *anawim* of the Old Testament whom Christ speaks of in the beatitudes—are the "dirt" which falls outside the

carefully wrought political structures of society, those whom society cannot accommodate. As such, they stand as a living challenge to its institutions, a potent and sacred revolutionary force. They represent, simply by what they are, the dialectical contradiction at the heart of a social order. They are the articulate signs of its failure, of the shapeless, unstructured life in its margins and in its crevices, with which the order cannot deal without destroying itself.

The *anawim* are the embodied negativity of each *status quo*, and as such focus its breaking-point. They are thus, themselves, a kind of contradiction: an expressive sign of human failure and limitation which yet, by pinpointing so exactly the limits of a social order, the points where it tails off into chaos, offers a positive symbol of the future. For the Christian, the oppressed and exploited are signs of the kingdom of Christ, not merely because they point to an eschatological reversal which will bring them to power at the end of history, but because they symbolize what is now still to be done. They show what areas of life are still unstructured by human institutions, what orders of experience fall outside our constructed worlds of meaning. Like Marx's organized proletariat, they are "a class . . . within human society which is the dissolution of all classes," an inherent and absurd contradiction at the core of the intelligibly structured. Like that proletariat, too, they stand as an absolute, negative threat to society, focusing the point at which its institutions must either break and dissolve to integrate them, or stand condemned.

For the Christian, however, there is no single integration: when Christ reminded his disciples that the poor were always with them, he committed his followers to a permanent revolution. Each dissolution and reintegration of political structures, each laborious breaking down and reconstruction, will in turn generate a new kind of exclusion and poverty. Wherever the lines of the structure are drawn, they will create fresh margins and fresh *anawim*, new regions of waste which will point again to limitation, and to the new revolution needed to surpass it. For the Christian, this dialectical process of death and rebirth, of revolution and consolidation, of the sacrality of the negative power of the oppressed and the sacrality of positive structuring, is the very form of salvation history, and open only to eschatological resolution. It is only in the political kingdom of heaven that this creative dialectic within the inner life of the sacred will reach its synthesis, and a structure be created which will not disclose its own deficiencies in the act of being realized.

The Christian political commitment, then, is neither conservative nor anarchist, but revolutionary in a Marxist sense. Because the exploited and oppressed are always with us, embodying the unreclaimed edges of each definitive order, a commitment to the sustaining of that order is a deafness to salvation history and to those who show forth, quasi-sacramentally the growth-points of new human integration. But because the *anawim*, like the ecclesial sacraments, are signs effective only insofar as they tend to their own abolition—because their whole potency, as negations of the present, is to be absorbed into a future, positive order where their symbolism will no longer be needed—the Christian commitment is to an extension of political structures, not to an anarchist or individualist dismantling of them.

Christian political commitment therefore reveals a parallel to the tension involved in the life of the sacred. It locates authentic reality—the sacred—in human structures, but also in the forces which at each point contradict those structures, in the antithesis which will generate a fresh synthesis. What transcends each political formulation, and leads the Christian to view all such formulations critically, is not a statically conceived God, but the transcendence of a human future working within the present for its surpassment, and then for its own surpassing. In this sense, the Christian's notion of the activity of the sacred finds its most exact political expression in a Marxist conception of history. To say that what can be sensed, along the fault-lines of a society, is the power of God, is to say that what is sensed is a revolutionary future.

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The church, as the imagery of the New Testament is concerned to show, unites dialectically both forms of the sacred. It is the city on the hill and (in Paul's phrase) the dung of the earth; the elaborately structured (constituted by precisely seven sacraments) and the wholly unstructured, the scum and detritus of human life. The *anawim* —the scum and refuse of society—have, like all dung, a contradictory status: the more they reveal dissolution and decay, the more politically fertile they become. If society, like the initiates whom Mary Douglas discusses, has the power to pass beyond its own boundaries and expose itself to the power of its own refuse, it can survive, but the deepest Christian paradox is that it will only survive, in any case, by death. In embracing its *anawim*, a society is embracing its own death: in the act of opening itself to its own absurdities it is bound to disintegrate, since it survives only by excluding these from its precariously maintained world of meaning.

It is this truth, also, which the Christian shares with the Marxist: because the pivot of their belief is death and resurrection, they regard the liberal reformist, in his hope for a smooth *transitus* from present to future, as naive. The unclean animal who is taken and eaten by the Christian is Christ himself, the absurdity at the heart of every intelligibility: "that which is rejected is ploughed back for a renewal of human life." In embracing the oppressed, society embraces those whose whole being is geared to its destruction, to shattering and recreating its universe. When a society opens itself to its *anawim,* it commits the folly of the cross, exposing itself to the ruthlessly healing life of Christ, who is the structure and denial of every political system.

Tempest in a copper pot

CHILE'S MINI-REVOLUTION

JAMES BECKET

What has happened in Chile during the three years that the Christian Democrats have held power? How has their widely hailed "revolution in liberty," their "third way" between capitalism and Communism, worked out? To be blunt, they have not made a revolution and they have not provided the example of a third way. Instead, they have opted for close cooperation with the United States, which poured millions into President Eduardo Frei's election campaign in 1964 and continues to support him. Chile is the star of the Alliance for Progress and Santiago is crowded with U.S. experts who fill vacated villas with infinite institutes.

The policies applied in Chile have been those of progressive AID development strategy for Latin America. Techniques include land and tax reform, incentives for foreign investment, community development and improved import policies (allowing only those imports that expand productive capacity). This strategy, devised in the Kennedy period, assumes that change is necessary and desirable and that it can be engineered through social science methods without anybody getting hurt (or, a cynic might add, without anything much changing). Despite its thoroughly technocratic flavor, the emotional and ideological base of Christian Democracy in Chile remains anti-Communism.

The accomplishments of the Frei regime have been mainly in education—the number of schools and teachers has increased and the simple innovation of offering two meals a day in the schools has raised attendance and improved nutrition among poor children; in tax reform—the imaginative device of running the Santiago telephone book and the tax lists through a computer helped increase overall tax receipts by 25 percent in 1965 and by nearly that in 1966; in the redistribution of income, especially in rural areas where the minimum wage was raised, bringing the *campesino* into the money economy, increasing his consumption and thereby stimulating domestic consumer industries; and finally, in increased housing, despite the disastrous bureaucracy of the government housing agency.

The Christian Democrats have also had a measure of success in combatting Chile's notorious inflation. They have reduced it from 48 percent in 1964 to 18 percent in 1966 (slightly over the planned 15 percent). Inflation rose again in 1967 to 20 percent, a sharp increase from the hoped-for 12-14 percent. Since the government controls the prices on the items in the sample market basket, the above inflation figures are artificially low and no one in Chile believes them, a fact of some political importance.

Land reform, which was one of the most emotional of the campaign issues in 1964, has had a mixed history. Since the Christian Democratic land reform bill only recently passed the Senate, the government had been working under a 1962 law which offered more generous com-

JAMES BECKET, *a lawyer and economist, lived for two years in Chile and recently returned from a month's visit there.*

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pensation for expropriated land. Some landholders have chosen to relinquish their properties under the old law rather than risk the new one, which has a penal character. It gives 1 percent cash down on abandoned land, 5 percent for badly exploited land and 10 percent if well exploited; the balance is to be paid in bonds over 25-30 years, 70 percent of which is adjustable to inflation.

The land reform program is, in Chilean fashion, quite sensible. The *campesinos* on an expropriated estate form an *asentamiento* which elects a directorate and receives assistance from a government agent. In the first year they farm the estate more or less as before; after two or three years they may continue to farm the land in common (the government's preference), divide it up among themselves or compromise between private and common ownership. Since the level of production on Chilean farms is very low compared with its potential, there is a good chance that output will immediately increase under the transitional system. That would be most important for a country that last year imported $120 million worth of food.

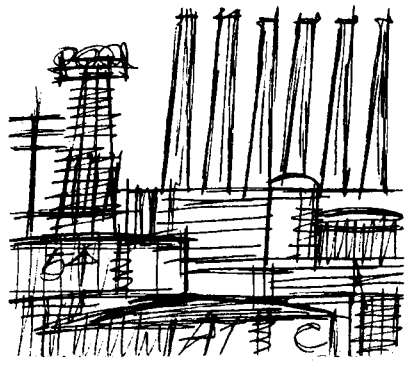
So far, one hundred *asentamientos* have been established; with the help of the new law, the target for the end of 1967 was 380-400 *asentamientos,* on which 11,500 families will be settled. The estimate for 1970, however, has been scaled down from 100,000 families to 40,000. There is still doubt, therefore, whether the land reform program really will succeed. Despite the efforts to make it self-financing, it is estimated that it will cost over one billion dollars and there is no comprehensive plan for raising that kind of money.

The most revolutionary activity of Chile's two land-reform agencies has been the organization of peasant unions, which have entered into fierce competition with Communist-sponsored unions. This awakening of the countryside could create an authentic, rural-based pressure for change that has been lacking.

In any general assessment of the achievements of the Christian Democrats, one would have to say that they have not constituted any challenge to the interests of the oligarchy or of foreign investors. New taxes have hit the middle class more than the rich and even land reform, although vital to one-third of Chile's population who have lived like serfs, is no threat to the power structure. Real economic and political power long ago moved to the financial and commercial strongholds of the city. Land reform, therefore, is a safe issue and every political party routinely advocates it.

And what about the Christian Democrats' failures? The major disappointment was the government's ineptitude in dealing with the copper industry, which brings in 70 percent of the nation's export earnings and is 85 percent owned by the United States. The Christian Democrats had promised to "Chileanize" copper, which meant that the government would stop short of nationalization but assume control of 51 percent of the companies and authorize a doubling of production by 1972. The government gained control of 51 percent of Kennecott's El Teniente mine (which accounts for 30 percent of total output), but won only 25 percent of two relatively small new ventures of Anaconda and Cerro. It failed completely to "Chileanize" Anaconda, the largest producer, although it won a contract for large new investments. The results, overall, contrast sharply with the potential three years ago when the copper companies were running scared. Even within their own concept of "Chileanization," the government made a bad deal.

For example, after negotiations with Anaconda had proved unsuccessful (and perhaps alarmed by that failure), the government simply accepted Kennecott's proposed arrangement, without questioning the company's calculations. El Teniente was evaluated at $160 million —half for existing plant and half for future value; compensation for Chile's share was $80 million. Without bringing in any fresh capital (the projected $230 million investment will come from international agencies and the Chilean government), Kennecott retains management for 11 years; its profits will go up since its effective tax rate is lowered from 85 percent to 45 percent (up to 1975 the



government will receive less in taxes under the new system than it would have under the old); Kennecott will get 20 years of tax stability and, with the state as partner, will be relieved of labor problems. (According to informed sources, Kennecott's major difficulty during the negotiations was keeping a straight face.)

The Christian Democrats have also failed to make good on other campaign proposals, notably the reform of private banks' control over credit and the nationalization of the telephone company (a subsidiary of ITT) and of the foreign electric company, both noted for poor service and high profits.

The government designed an anti-poverty program (*Promocion Popular*) which was supposed to organize the poor to help themselves. The program has been riddled with politics and paternalism, however (handing out food baskets in the slums is a fairly typical project), and it has been staffed with middle class bureaucrats who have spent most of their time in downtown offices.

At most, then, the Christian Democrats have initiated a kind of New Deal. The question is whether such reformist

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measures are adequate for a country like Chile which stands between the rich and the poor nations. One reason the Christian Democrats have not realized their early promise is that the party has grown too quickly and the additions have not always been of the highest caliber. Along with the many idealists who entered government at considerable personal sacrifice, a number of opportunists have attached themselves to the party. They are the ones who take frequent trips abroad, buy expensive cars for government agencies and so on. Some businessmen are making a fortune through their party connections.

Secondly, the party was not prepared for power, either in its program or ideology. It clearly was pro-God and anti-capitalist, but beyond that it was vague. No one seemed sure what the shibboleth of *cambios estructurales* (structural changes) entailed. A prime example of how a lack of careful preparation left them open to ambush was their negotiations with the copper companies.

Thirdly, when the Christian Democrats came to power, they were appalled by the inefficiency of the State's gigantic, unwieldy bureaucracy, but were helpless to change it. In Chile, the State dominates life. Accounting for 70 percent of investment in the country's mixed economy, employing thousands of people, fixing prices and so on, it stands unchallenged. With time and their innate respect for legal procedure, they learned to follow the tortuous paths of bureaucracy. Having accepted the game, they learned its rules, but this cost them time and sapped their zeal. Above all, the Christian Democrats played politics. To a certain extent that was inevitable since politics so permeates life and conversation in Chile. Still, the Christian Democrats consistently tended to identify the party interest with the national interest.

With all the government's problems, however, there is no serious political threat at the moment to a long Christian Democratic reign. Much of the party's support in 1964 came from those voting against Communism or, in what was a very dirty campaign, against having their children sent to Russia. The party's majority, which was 54 percent in 1964, dropped to 36.5 percent in a municipal election last March, but if the choice again was to be between Marxism and Christian Democracy, the latter would win. As for other alternatives, the traditional Right, devastatingly known as *los momios* (the mummies), and now regrouped in the National Party, have had their day. A man with an oligarchic name can no longer even consider running for office. The Left, demoralized after the 1964 election, are stymied by the problem of finding a means to power internally and embarrassed by the divisions in the international Communist movement. The Christian Democrats are the party of the modern Church; they tend to come from Conservative families but they have a social conscience and a political consciousness.

In recent months the strongest challenge to the Christian Democrats has come from the young Turks within their own party. Among other things, they are pressing the government to get on with the promised nationalizations. Dissatisfied with the rate of change, they want to hasten the revolution. The government counters that it needs private enterprise if it is to achieve the things the people want: more houses, roads, schools, industries, work. Right now, achieving these things is more important than making a revolution, abolishing capitalism or establishing communitarianism. Quite concretely, the government points out that no one will invest in projects or in the economy if there is a strong threat of nationalization. The one sure result would be a flight of capital, foreign and domestic. In a sense, the government has the worst of two worlds: it needs private enterprise but is committed to phasing it out. The Young Turks ignore or deny the first and insist on the second. Although these impatient young rebels are dismissed as dreamers who are free with advice they will not have to carry out, the government is finding them an embarrassment.

This examination of Chile's "Revolution in Liberty" has concentrated on its internal difficulties. The major issue, however, and the significance of the Chilean experience for Latin America, is not in its imaginary "third way" but in the ramifications of its economic alliance with the United States. For example, when the price of copper mounted to record heights on the London Market last year, the price in Chile held firm. Heavy pressure was exerted by the U.S. to maintain the price. It seems that President Johnson was having inflation problems and a copper price increase would have damaged his domestic program. Chile finally raised prices in the third quarter of 1966; soon after, the world price dropped.

In any case, Chile is currently undergoing an economic crisis. The price of copper is down, the budget is in deficit, inflation is rising more rapidly than planned, savings are so low that a system of forced savings was proposed (diverting 25% of cost-of-living salary raises to a National Investment Fund that would invest the money in development projects) and then considerably modified after a hue and cry was raised that the workers would bear the greatest brunt of the plan (the new idea is to exempt the lowest paid and substitute a graduated scale of contributions for the previous across-the-board deductions), unemployment is up, especially in construction, the foreign debt quietly grows and funds must be found for the expanded bureaucracy and programs like the land reform. In the relatively good times of 1965 and 1966, there was enough money to get by without coming to grips with the inherent contradictions of the economy. But the day of reckoning is now at hand.

The central question posed by the current crisis is whether Chile can break out of its underdevelopment by following a policy of close cooperation with the United States. How far down the road of revolution can Chile, or any other Latin American nation, go, arm in arm with Uncle Sam?

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YES, MY DARLING DAUGHTER

THE SCREEN

However you may feel about Stanley Kramer's films, you have to admit that this producer often rushes in with timely themes where other angels fear to tread. His "High Noon" (about involvement and responsibility), his "Inherit the Wind" (freedom of expression), his "The Defiant Ones" (black-and-white relationships), "On the Beach" (A-bomb and annihilation), "Judgment at Nuremberg" (war guilt), and others of his movies were about what people are talking about and are disturbed about. Perhaps it has been rightly objected that Kramer seldom goes into his topics in depth; and no doubt the same objection can be made about his new picture. "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" discusses interracial marriage at length without getting down to basic integration problems, but it does succeed in pushing the audience into thinking and manages to be entertaining about it.

"Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" is a comedy, somewhat like those comedies we used to get from Maugham, Pinero and Philip Barry, comedies with a core of a problem and a lot of bright talk surrounding it. William Rose's original screenplay has some very amusing dialogue that gets rather highfalutin at times but does manage to settle down to the serious issues; the trouble with it is that it's so talky, and director Stanley Kramer lets his movie get stagey at times—like a TV show. But the performances throughout are fine, with Katharine Houghton as the girl who returns to her San Francisco home with her fiancé whom she met ten days ago in Hawaii, and Sidney Poitier as this fiancé, an eminent doctor-scientist who works for the U.N. and will be leaving almost immediately on an assignment abroad. Her upper-class, liberal-minded parents are effectively portrayed by Spencer Tracy, as a highly respected newspaper editor, and Katharine Hepburn, as the svelte, likable mother who is classy as all get-out and excellent in a role she has played so often during the years that one almost expects her to ask if this situation is "yar," the word tossed around in "The Philadelphia Story." As the fiancé's Negro parents who are coming to dinner tonight, Roy E. Glenn, Sr., and Beah Richards are at first just as shocked at the young couple's engagement as are the girl's parents.

As the evening passes, Glenn, like Tracy, gets more and more annoyed at the situation, while warm, lovable Miss Richards and high-minded Miss Hepburn become adjusted and then approving. Equally good in the supporting cast, and also managing to get their two-cents worth into the discussion, are Cecil Kellaway, as a monsignor and old family friend who beams and approves and practically blesses the forthcoming union, and Isabell Sanford, as the family's Negro maid who shows her disapproval by misbehaving and being as rude as she can to Poitier. *She* sums it all up with: "Civil rights is one thing, but this is something else."

That the cards are stacked in this story of an interracial marriage is obvious. This is no ordinary tale about a black and white marrying, or about the problems that are going to confront them if they were lower middle class. Sidney Poitier portrays a handsome, brilliant doctor to whom doors and jobs are going to be opened in many places nowadays. And pretty newcomer Katharine Houghton (who is Miss Hepburn's real-life niece, by the way, and looks remarkably like her aunt) plays a well-bred college girl. They'll get along. Already their mothers are consenting with the love-conquers-all argument. Their fathers, although angry, hurt, and baffled at first, finally see the light. The calm monsignor tells off Spencer with: "It's amusing to see a broken down old liberal like you come face to face with his principles." But then this monsignor is a very enlightened man. He even reads *Commonweal* and tells editor Tracy that he first saw an article about the doctor in that magazine. Perhaps this monsignor, who is not shocked at all at the prospect of this white girl's marrying the good Negro man, is the wisest one in this mixed bag of characters. Some day no one will be shocked. And in the meantime, perhaps we should be grateful for "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" which only scratches the surface of the whole problem but is bound to win audiences with its lively scratching.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

THE VICTOR OF TROY

THE STAGE

Euripides' "Iphigenia in Aulis" is a beautiful and intelligent play. Tragedies, like women, are often lovely but brainless, or bright but unsightly; this play lacks nothing. It is the very model of a Greek tragedy in which there is no villain, only guiltless guilt. The gods (if it is they) make an impossible demand: to obtain a wind enabling the Greek army to sail to Troy, Agamemnon must sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia on the altar of Artemis. At first, he unwillingly consents in the public interest, then he countermands his initial order. But the fatal mechanism has been set in motion, and no mortal can stop it.

Others, too, make mistakes. Menelaus, itching to recover Helen, at first sides with the gods against Iphigenia, thus helping the initial error—or the machinery of fate—along its way. He, too, repents and changes his mind; too late—he has already made his small but necessary contribution to the girl's doom. By now, the high priest having broadcast the will of the gods, the entire army

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clamors for the innocent blood: *vox dei* has become *vox populi* and there is no gainsaying it.

One champion comes to the aid of the princess: Achilles. It was on the pretext of betrothal to him that Iphigenia was lured to Aulis, where the fleet lies becalmed. His honor has been trifled with, and to avenge it, as well as in deference to the frantic Clytemnestra, he undertakes to rescue her daughter. When he meets the girl, smitten with her beauty and courage, he is ready for civil, rather than recriminatory and colonial, war.

But here the individual achieves true greatness by rising to the terrible demands of destiny. Iphigenia, a moment ago a child childishly rejoicing in her engagement, turns suddenly but believably into a woman, a human being, a heroine—engaged, *engagée*, in a far deeper sense. Transcending a mother's grief, a lover's needs, a father's harrowing impotence, she shoulders her fate with naked nobility, and becomes, as the chorus proclaims, the true victor of Troy. And more than that: she becomes the exemplar for every human being who, in his last hour, must accept the unacceptable. She becomes a model for us all.

Euripides' sublime work has this final quality to make it precious to us: it is extremely modern. For in it, implicitly and even explicitly, the challenge to God rings out: God is cruel, or he does not exist; either morally or literally, God is dead. And it is for such a universe that Euripides speaks his words of courage and consolation.

Michael Cacoyannis, a director whose work I have lately deplored, rouses himself here to considerable heights. This is a much more controlled and judicious production than his "Trojan Women" of some years ago, to say nothing of his other plays and movies since. Here stage movement has become more purposive, less frilly; people are even allowed to stand still at times and just be heard. Occasionally, the chorus will assume a grouping from a Greek frieze, but antiquity is not rubbed in any more than modernity is. To be sure, the chorus is an insuperable problem for today's directors: there is almost no way of making that institution look wholly different from Founder's Day at Bryn Mawr or Wellesley, or wherever the drama of hoop-racing flourishes. But Cacoyannis at least gets his chorus looking only distracted, not demented, and in Erin Martin he has an intense and nimble chorus leader. He may have allowed his cast to declaim a shade too much, but excess in the opposite direction would have been worse.

The acting is surprisingly adequate, which for American actors in Greek tragedy is a landmark. Mitchell Ryan's Agamemnon is not regal enough, Irene Pappas' Clytemnestra is hampered by her Greek accent (she does not want to become "a nivvle woman"), and Christopher Walken, a handsome and well-spoken Achilles, is a trifle too terpsichoreanly tripping in his movements. But these are only peccadilloes, and in Jenny Leigh, as Iphigenia, the American theater has a major find. A delicately lissome, winsome beauty, Miss Leigh manages the taxing transition from child to woman to tragic heroine with a passionate restraint that would be admirable in a much more seasoned actress, but in one so young is breathtaking. Her performance irradiates the shadowiest corners of the proceedings.

The translation, on first hearing, sounds good, though Minos Volanakis occasionally lapses into poeticism ("He seals the circle perfect and the line unbreakable") or solecism ("You're off of your mind"). Michael Annals, an often imaginative designer, has come up with an expressively gnarled stairway, but also with flatly prosaic costumes. Marvin David Levy's music is, at least, inoffensive, and Jules Fisher's lighting, as always, inspiration as much as illumination. But the great light is shed by Euripides, of whom a later and lesser Greek poet, George Seferis, has aptly said, "He saw man's veins/ as a net the gods made to catch us in like wild beasts;/ he tried to pierce it."

JOHN SIMON

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

JOHN FREDERICK NIMS

MEMENTO

The flesh says: "Finish. I'm not long for you.
Tomorrow to another. And soon due
In ferns. Or on a gull's salt feather flown.
Or finswept shoalward. Finish. I'm a loan."

BLIND JOY

Crude seeing's all our joy: could we discern
The cold dark infinite vast where atoms burn
—Lone suns—in flesh, our treasure and our play,
Who'd dare to breathe this fern-thick bird-rich day?

RETURN

The world of shadow-matter science knows,
Those fabulous nations—we're the ghost of those?
Progress at last: the souls have room to move.
What gates in Eden scrape the aeruginous groove?

● ● ● ●

MOTHER MARY ANTHONY, S.H.C.J.

THE TELEPHONE POLE THAT USED TO BE A TREE

Under the stain on the smooth bole
The knots grimace,
Lopped clean of acquisitiveness,
Offering no comment on life or death,
Violence or transcendence,
Like the quiescent Sybil at Cumae
Transmitting ordinary words.

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BOOKS

Frank Conroy, Harold Nicolson, Robert Adolfs, et al.

Stop-time

FRANK CONROY

Viking, $5.95

CHARLES BRONZE

It would be misleading to describe *Stop-time* as a memoir of childhood and leave it at that. This is not the sort of book one has read before, and it resists categorization. Autobiography, yes, closet novel, yes, non-fiction chronicle, yes—but most importantly it is art, with no other purposes than the purposes of art.

There are no extra-literary reasons for reading Conroy. He saw, in his young life, little or nothing of historical interest, nor do we feel the sort of gossipy curiosity in his story that we might were he famous and powerful. Nevertheless *Stop-time* is a fascinating book, reaching deeper preoccupations in the reader than those reached by the conventions of traditional autobiography. I suspect Conroy chose his own life as a subject not so much because of any assumption that its rather bizarre details held special significance in and of themselves, but in order to be freed from the artificialities involved in writing the sort of book where everything has to be thought up from scratch. He wanted to be able to take the framework entirely for granted and concentrate instead on what lurks behind plot, characters, etc.—on the mysterious forces he senses operating behind reality. Here he is at the age of 12, in Florida, with his pal.

"Once we found a dead mule, bones picked almost clean, ants streaming through the eyes. The stench was too much for us and after poking the corpse we ran away, gasping for breath. We talked about that mule for weeks. What was its fascination? Death dramatized, something of unbelievable importance being revealed right in front of us. But something else too. We rambled over a tremendous amount of space every day, over vast areas of silent, empty woods (a pine woods on sandy ground is more like a desert than anything else), rambled over miles of wasteland trying to find the center of it, the heart, the place to be to *know* it. We sensed the forces around us but they were too thinly spread, too finely drawn over all the miles of woods for us to grasp them. The forces eluded us. We would run into a clearing knowing that just a moment ago, in that instant before we had arrived, something of importance had happened there. But when we found the dead mule we knew we were close, suddenly very close. Those forces spread like air over the woods had converged here, on this animal the moment he died, and were not yet altogether gone."

The facts are presented in the first two sentences. Another writer might have stopped there, but Conroy goes on to get into what interests him, the "forces" coexisting with visible reality. In exactly the same way as young Conroy was fascinated by the mule, so the artist Conroy is fascinated by ten years of his childhood. He pokes the corpse for 300 pages — watching, listening, waiting for signs. What makes the book extraordinary is the fact that he did not wait in vain. Under the intense pressure of the demands of his art he captured the essence of his experience, absorbing, finally, those mysteries of which he had so long been aware as a child. Reading the book is, consequently, a profoundly satisfying experience.

Stop-time purports to be literally true, and one knows, somehow, that it is—yet it is so close to a novel as to raise the question if terms like novel, memoir, fiction and non-fiction are not becoming less useful as tools with which to dissect the literature of our time. To be accurate one would have to say simply that *Stop-time* is a book, a quite beautiful book which defines, more or less like certain poems, its own genre. Rather than recapitulate the story, which would be misleading, I will describe the setting of some of the most memorable scenes and quote the author.

Forced to spend the night at a Connecticut institution for the feebleminded at which his mother and stepfather worked for a time as wardens, Conroy observes: "It was noisy. A noise that raised the hair on the back of my neck. Far-out throats, tongues, and lips forming sounds that wound their independent way up and down the scale . . . all of it in random dynamic waves like some futuristic orchestra. In this meaningless music were sudden cries of such intense human significance that I stood paralyzed. It was as if all the saints, martyrs, and mystics of human history were gathered into a single building, each one crying out at the moment of revelation, each one truly *there* at his extreme of joy or pain . . ."

Later, in a scene of almost comic grotesqueness, his mother, an amateur soprano, gives a concert at the same institution, accompanied by a weird, sexless musician who boarded for years with the family. The pianist, Donald, is an enemy of the boy, who fears his sadistic power:

"Donald walks quickly from the wings and takes his place at the piano without looking at the audience. His hanging tails almost touch the floor. He bows his head, waiting. I hear the faint swish of her gown. She is onstage! A rush of light and color, sequins, her heels clicking against the polished wood, her body moving in a blur of swirling clothes and incandescent air. A muted gasp from the inmates at the splendid sight of her, then silence. She stands next to the Steinway, one hand touching the wood. After a moment she looks at Donald, and then back at the audience.

"Beside me (an) old man is awake, leaning forward to watch her, his jaw

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slack and his eyes blinking slowly. He lifts a long, veined hand from his knee and holds it motionless in the air. Up front a cretin in a wheelchair moans and burbles sleepily.

"Donald begins to play and my mother sings 'Hills of Home.' I am not sad, not happy, not anything. My eyes fill with irrelevant tears."

When he was 15-years-old Conroy's mother went to Europe, during which time his cab-driving stepfather brought another woman into the house, a woman on the verge of nervous collapse he'd picked up in his cab. Conroy listens to her ranting on the telephone: "I walked past her into the hall to my own room two doors away. Sitting on the edge of my bed I listened to her voice while indulging in a favorite vice, the slow removal, millimeter by millimeter, of fingernails so short there was almost nothing left to bite. Sadness crept over me—a sadness I didn't question, a sadness so profound I understood it could not have come from life, or any source within my conceptual scope, but instead seeped into me from the very air, from the whole extant universe in which I was less than a speck, sadness that was not emotion but the awareness of vast emptinesses. With my head in my hands I looked down at my feet, knowing that at any second my body might fade out, wavering into invisibility like Robert Donat in 'The Ghost Goes West'."

In these passages, and others, Conroy recreates highly complex moments of consciousness with astonishing skill. His clean, luminous lines, superbly balanced and entirely under control, lead us inevitably to the soul (not just the mind, the *soul*) of the boy he was. We see quite clearly what is happening around the boy, those things going on outside him, and yet we never for a moment lose touch with the inside of him. We feel him coexisting with us as we read, we are aware of his presence. It is perhaps the tension of this double vision that gives the book its strong narrative drive. Whatever the cause it is safe to say *Stop-time* is intensely readable, and that no-one who starts it will fail to finish it. One reads it not for facts, or the story of Conroy's life, but in order to reinforce one's sense of the dimensions of human experience. The superficial simplicity, not to say banality, of the author's personal history only make it easier for him to draw the reader to a much deeper level where all men, great and small, smart and stupid, are brothers in the common problem of existence itself, of being human in an incomprehensible universe.

Stop-time is ambitious, serious, and beautifully written, unquestionably a significant work of contemporary art. Its publication announces the arrival of an important new American writer.

China: The Other Communism

K. S. KAROL

Hill & Wang, $7.95

JONATHAN MIRSKY

This is an extraordinarily moral book on China today by a journalist who has every reason to be carping, cynical, and suspicious. K.S. Karol is a Pole who was educated in the Soviet Union, fought in the Red Army against the Nazis and underwent a dismal treatment of postwar Russian persecution. Living in Paris during recent years as correspondent for the *New Statesman* and *Nouvel Observateur,* he established a reputation for reliable "inside" reporting on Communist affairs culminating in a recent description in the *New Statesman* of the leaders of Eastern European communism blasting the Soviets for their faulty intelligence during the Arab-Israeli war. It was, of course, a closed meeting. One would like to know Karol's source.

In 1965 Karol and Marc Ribaud, the photographer, went to China for four months, traveling 15,000 miles, visiting the major centers (except Lanchow the science and nuclear capital) and interviewing countless Chinese including Chou En-lai (this interesting exchange is given nearly complete in an appendix).

Karol says: "For my part, I never believed that China was a paradise, but I wanted to know what Chinese communism was like and to try to judge it on the spot and from the facts without prejudice." This sounds reasonable enough, but surely a Pole and avowed anti-Stalinist like Karol will inevitably judge harshly. But we are surprised early in the book by a tone of hope and reasonableness which informs the whole: "This book is not an apologia for China, and at no time have I hidden the fact which offended me . . . I am convinced that the Chinese revolution has given dignity and hope to the Chinese, but I am nonetheless sure that every revolution needs criticism as man needs air to breathe."

Such honest and friendly reporting stems from careful investigation and an awareness of not always obvious pitfalls. For instance, at one Commune two old peasants are trotted out who speak rapturously of the present. Karol—not brutally—asks some embarrassing questions about the great leap forward. "Consternation. The two old men concentrate on their cucumbers and disappear . . . The spell is obviously broken." Ten days later, however, Karol asked similar questions of another guide who "vented quite severe criticisms" of some of the ventures during the great wave of "communal enthusiasm." Either of these interviews by itself would have given an unclear picture of how Chinese face up to reality.

The principal achievement of *China: The Other Communism* is its clear presentation in historical terms of the balance between past and present. For about a quarter of his book Karol offers a scholarly, meticulous, lucid account of the development of Chinese nationalism based on the best available sources. The fascinating and unusual aspect of this section is the constant interpolation of the way Communist Chinese look at their own past. Thus Karol tells us about the founding of the Party and its desperate early years and simultaneously, through invaluable interviews and visits, shows how these episodes are now *retreated* (as opposed to Stalinist *re-writing*). In the room where the Chinese CP was founded hang six portraits. But twelve men were present. The other six —*when asked about*—are either carefully dismissed or obliquely referred to: "His name would mean nothing to you, and we ourselves can hardly remember

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it." The Maoists, says Karol, "feel free to keep only what they consider essential without having to fill in too many of the blanks."

But the great and more meaningful disparities are in the quality of life itself. In one town Karol inquires about living conditions. The mayor says he is *hoping* to provide 32 square feet per person, 40 square feet *less* than in the most overcrowded Soviet accommodations—about which all Russians complain. How then, asks Karol "has the regime succeeded in disciplining people who suffer great privation and live in conditions which in all countries and at all period of history have led to squalor and encouraged crime?"

For one thing, China is clean. One can drink tap water throughout the major cities (try that elsewhere outside Japan!). China is honest. Karol had his share of typical experiences with Chinese chasing him to return items like packets of sunflower seeds. Karol finds the ultimate answers in planning (centralized and flexible), improvement of quality, of exports (which raises living standards inside China), and "elimination of material incentives and the raising of the level of political consciousness of the workers." Karol is not naive about the relationship between economic and social progress, but he is convinced that without the former, the latter will surely not follow. Moralizing, whether from Chiang Kai-shek or Nehru, will not build a nation.

On Chinese foreign policy Karol is startling. He reports for instance that although bitterness against the Soviet Union is great it seems purely *political* "At no time . . . did any of the Chinese I met refer to the problem of the celebrated Chinese-Soviet border." In the West we hear much of Chinese ill-will towards Russian seizure of Chinese territory. *No* evidence of this, however, appeared in newspapers or maps while Karol was in China. Such news should sadden only the super-hawks who hope for a war between Peking and Moscow.

There are now a number of recent books on China from Western eye-witnesses which should be taken very seriously: William Hinton's *Fan Shen*—a unique social study, Edgar Snow's *The Other Side of the River*, Robert Guillian's *When China Wakes*, and now *China: The Other Communism*. Karol's volume offers high quality travel-reporting combined with sensitive and scholarly political insights.

Pop Art

LUCY LIPPARD

Praeger, $7.50

Object and Idea

BRIAN O'DOHERTY

Simon & Schuster, $5.95

RICHARD KOSTELANETZ

Pop Art is visibly so different from the styles previously dominant in America, as well as nearly all past art, that it has posed a number of critical puzzles, as well as the occasion for revision of our aesthetic comprehension: If only because, as Brian O'Doherty writes, "Art criticism has to be reinvented for every generation." This particular new style produced a succession of befuddled yet probing books, each entitled *Pop Art* and each offering more substantial criticism than its predecessor. As Mario Amaya's (Viking, 1966) was several levels more perceptive than John Rublowsky's (Basic, 1965), so the text of Lucy Lippard's should more or less supersede all previous extended writings on the subject. However, the illustrations in these three books have become progressively smaller and fuzzier; for only Ken Heyman's pictures, in the Rublowsky volume simulates reasonable viable substitutes for the original works; if the first is art with criticism, the last is criticism with illustrations.

What informs Lippard's text is a sure sense of discrimination and measure; for she is also one of the sharpest and most adventurous, continually engaged critics in America. After circumscribing the Pop waters from the surrounding lands, she recognizes individuals within the larger stream, distinguishing the true Pop artists from peripheral workers, discerning how the presuppositions of one artist differ from those of another, elucidating major individual works, evaluating the total output of the style's major exponents (Oldenburg, Lichtenstein, Warhol, Wesselman and Rosenquist), as well as identifying many lesser known artists who have contributed to the tendency.

Her *Pop Art* is extremely informative, as well as reasonably accurate, about chronologies, the use of unprecedented subjects and materials, and the acknowledged influences; and for illustrations she generally eschews the most familiar pictures in favor of less famous, yet typical, works. Those areas of her subject she does not know—the Pop art activities in London and Los Angeles—she passes on to Lawrence Alloway and Nancy Marmer, respectively, both of whom contribute skillfully to the total picture. The one disappointing, if not superfluous, contribution is a general essay by the critic and ex-Surrealist, Nicolas Calas.

The book's major evasion stems from the implications of O'Doherty's aphorism, quoted before, that every new art needs a new criticism. The language and approach adopted by both Lippard and her collaborators would have been just as appropriate for previous art, as well as for other current styles—a straight-forward expository journalese, which emphasizes formal description; and this may perhaps explain why their *Pop Art* hardly scratches such radical questions as whether Pop painting offers a particular kind of visual experience and whether it demands of the spectator a different order of aesthetic perception. I sense that Pop Art does, as do both mixed-means art and minimal styles to an even greater degree; and since Lippard confronts these possibilities in her recent monograph on *Ad Reinhardt* (Jewish Museum, 1967), their absence here is especially conspicuous.

Brian O'Doherty tries occasionally to pursue his wisdom, as well as to tackle more contemporary tendencies than Pop; but in *Object and Idea,* a collection of periodical essays from 1961-67, he appropriates an incredible variety of critical styles, ranging from pure enthusiastic slapdash reportage to scep-

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tical reflective criticism, none of which accomplishes the breakthrough he would like. O'Doherty has, in this time of neatly circumscribed careers, trod a grasshopper's path, as well as stuck his finger through many disintegrating pies —such as *Show* magazine and a lecture series on television. Although he courageously accepts the risks involved in collecting miscellaneous pieces, his book reveals an absence of discriminating interest and decided taste that would be more embarrassing if he were not a critic of intelligence, erudition and general good sense. The width of a book's page makes the paragraphs originally published in the New York *Times* seem embarrassingly short, slight and abrupt, while the pieces from *Newsweek* and *Art and Artists* are generally more substantial.

Not even these better essays—on Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* and "The Artist as Performer"—make *Object and Idea* a particularly important book; for the more considered and thorough critical survey that O'Doherty easily could have written would have provided a more significant response to recent art. Here, more questions are raised than threshed out, difficult issues sometimes dissolve in fuzzy thinking; and the best perceptions appear, with annoying frequency, buried in a paragraph, rather than subjected to more extensive elaboration. A polemical theme that pops up sufficient times to become an implicit argument is that avant-garde tendencies expired around 1960, because the bourgeois audience so quickly lapped up the latest styles. This is wrong on its face, because only some of the latest styles were taken up so quickly—"happenings" or mixed-means theatrical events still win meager audiences, a smaller press and even less publicity; and for some years now we have used the term "avant-garde" less in a sociological sense than as an art-historical designation to characterize styles so decidedly ahead of the current norm, as well as persuasive, that promise to win a larger audience of artists and advocates. In this sense, the avant-garde, rather avant-gardes, is still very much with us; and unless modern history comes to an end, I see no reason why they would not arise for a while to come.

The War Years: 1939-45

HAROLD NICOLSON

Atheneum, $8.50

HARRY J. MOONEY, JR.

When it appeared that Vita Sackville-West might be forced to flee her home in Kent because of a possible German invasion, her husband, Harold Nicolson, requested that she take with her only one of his possessions: his compendious diary. The request was significant, for as any careful reader of this or the preceding volume (published in the United States a year ago) sees at once, these diaries provide a kind of continuity between the public and the private Nicolson, binding together his disparate activities and preoccupations in such a way that they become reflections of a complex, but single, personality. When toward the end of the present volume the reader discovers Nicolson pondering the *New Yorker* review by Edmund Wilson which held that Nicolson was inhibited as a writer by seeing life only "through the embassy window," he is indeed likely to think that only now, and in this highly particularized form, has the best and most enduring of Nicolson arrived.

What are the qualities which define these diaries? First, Nicolson's ingrained aristocratism, which, though not of the rebarbative order of his wife's disdain and mistrust of the new and democratic, was nevertheless the source of many of his most important values. Although he wrote that he hated the rich, he "loved learning, scholarship, intelligence and the humanities," and he instinctively rejected what was inimical to them.

What this conviction meant in terms of his public life appears when, following a crisis of authority at the B.B.C., Nicolson wrote to Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, whom he greatly admired and with whom he worked in total concord on the Board of Governors: "It is the absence of any corporate function which renders the Board so contemptible a body. We are about to enter an age when all the old values will be called into question and many of the most precious of them discarded, not because they lack validity, but merely because they are old. We cannot hope that the press as a whole will swim against the tide of vulgarization which will sweep in from the west. Only the B.B.C. can teach the public to think correctly, to feel nobly, to enjoy themselves intelligently, to have some conception of what is meant by the good life. Our responsibility is tremendous. I do not want to shirk that responsibility. And yet in seeking to convey it to my colleagues, I have to introduce words and concepts of which they have no understanding at all. They remain completely unaware of what we mean when we speak of the B.B.C.'s unerring instinct for the second-rate."

The second trait so evident in these diaries reflects the inner man, concealed in public by the M.P., by Duff Cooper's second-in-command at the Ministry of Information, by the governor of the B.B.C., and by the campaigner, speaker and writer. While he was working under Cooper, Nicolson wrote: "I confess that it has often puzzled me why a person of my ability, knowledge, experience, industry and integrity should not somehow make a certain effect." When he was dismissed from the Ministry solely because Churchill needed the post for a Laborite, he could only continue, "Now I shall be a might-have-been. Always up till now I have been buoyed by the hope of writing some good book or achieving a position of influence in politics. I now know that I shall never write a book better than I have written already, and that my political career is at an end." Two years later, Vita Sackville-West diagnosed her husband's difficulty: she deplored the dispersal of activity which kept him from developing in one solid line. Significantly, she preferred for him "the rebuilding and planning of England, both urban and rural," a choice which she immediately designated "not sufficiently 'public life' " for him.

The third salient characteristic of Nicolson's mind is its ironic awareness of

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the intellectual's dual position: almost of necessity committed to the world of the future, he is nevertheless attached to that of the past. Yet Nicolson himself frequently formulates his ideas on the basis of both compassion and pragmatism. Of the need to send rapid food aid to Greece, he wrote: "What does even the *Symposium* matter compared to the death by hunger of 200 Greeks a day?" But this compassion perhaps finds its counterpart in a detachment, pitilessly analytical, which is usually directed only towards Nicolson himself or some attribute of his class. In this spirit, he drew the lesson of the fall of Singapore: "It is the dread that we are only half-hearted in fighting the wholehearted. It is even more than that. We intellectuals must feel that in all these years we have derided the principle of force upon which our Empire is built. We undermined confidence in our own formula. The intellectuals of 1870 did the same." Since irony is in many ways a heightened intelligence of awareness, it is not surprising that the diaries are a deeply ironic work.

Yet Nicolson's irony never qualifies all the deeply lived experience he describes: an experience derived from so many levels that it records the whole man. In the political activity of the period, Nicolson is most concerned with the massive presence of Churchill and the meaning of his mystique as it actually operated in the Commons, with the apocalyptic challenge of 1940, with the half-tragic, half-comic development of the cause of de Gaulle and the Free French, and with his own increasingly ominous awareness of the new emerging order and the role the Soviets would play in it.

To all of this must be added Nicolson's profound, almost Tolstoyan, sense of the happiness of family life, a happiness of course all the more profoundly realized because of the extent to which it was threatened. To the ironic dimension of the *Diaries*, then, one must join the pastoral, the idyllic. At the end of 1942 Nicolson wrote to his wife, who had complained that it is silly to think "that anything in life matters much": "I think everything in life matters terribly. I feel that this war is a test of our character and I rejoice that all those I love have come through it enhanced and not diminished. . . . I really do believe that we in England have set an example to the world." Nicolson is *par excellence* the individual who reflects the theme of England's triumph. And thus the centrality of Churchill.

It is characteristic of Harold Nicolson that six weeks before the July election of 1945 he should forecast the swing to the left, tracing its causes and dispassionately aware of its consequences for himself. Those consequences, he knew, would be great, for "I have loved my ten years at Westminster, and have found there that combination of genial surroundings with useful activity which is the basis of all human happiness." And yet, although Nicolson's enthusiasm for politics animates these pages, there is a final and predictable tension in this volume, that between the public man, dedicated and principled in a way Americans are likely to think of as especially British, and the private man who laments the other's lack of fulfillment. It is finally the peculiar distinction of these diaries that they unify by closing, to some extent, the gap out of which they were composed. In doing so, they raise the form of the diary from the literary man's paragon to his major work.

The Grave of God

ROBERT ADOLFS

Harper & Row, $4.50

JOHN L. McKENZIE

Taking his title from Nietzsche, Robert Adolfs, a young Dutch Augustinian, asks whether the Church has a future. He believes that the secular world has pushed the Church into the area of purely private life in which it is no longer relevant to the world. If the Church is to have any meaning, it must develop a different character. He calls for a *kenosis*, an emptying of the Church; as a power structure it is unable to compete with the power structures of the secular world. In the concrete, the *kenosis* means the renunciation of power and wealth, of pomp and clerical privilege, personal instead of territorial division of jurisdictions, pastoral instead of legal government, and truthfulness. The thesis thus summarized seems quite simple and not really new, since most of its elements have already been stated by others. The strength of the book is in the clarity and candor with which the thesis is stated.

Adolfs has actually instituted an attack on the institutional Church which is just as vigorous as the attacks of Davis and Kavanaugh. He differs from them in his belief that the Church can and must reform itself from within; I suppose he differs also in his readiness to wait until the reform happens. His sense of urgency is no less than theirs. But he differs from them also in stating his position with cool impersonality, which does not mean that he is uninvolved. But nothing suggests that only personal experience has contributed to his writing; indeed, no personal experience appears at all.

The *kenosis* demands that the Church go back to the fateful choice it made when Constantine liberated it, and take the other path. Its union with the secular power structure has long been broken, but the Church still conducts itself as if the union still existed. Such a step is equivalent to confessing that the Church has been doing things the wrong way since 313 A.D., and Adolfs does not shrink from this implication. One aspect of the truthfulness which he says the Church must exhibit is the honest admission of mistakes. The "kenotic" Church will not attempt to get out of the private role which the secular world has assigned it—a role which Adolfs somewhat originally compares to the role of American Indians on reservations. Without saying it expressly, he describes a return of the Church to the conventicles of the apostolic Church. Its influence will lie entirely in the direct personal effect it has on the individual members.

To this reader it appears that the author is unduly impressed by the technological developments of the secular world, by which I mean that I do not

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believe the secular world is any more secular now than it was when the apostolic Church confronted the secular world. Whatever else the Roman world was, it was not religious. This is not in opposition to Adolfs' thesis, for the Church grew in the Roman world precisely as he says it must live in the modern secular world. My point is that the problem is not entirely new, and the suggestion that it may be entirely new tends, I suspect, to discourage those who contemplate it.

The author does not ask in so many words whether the change he foresees for the Church can be accomplished without a revolution. I share his faith in the power of the Church to renew herself, but I am less certain of the form which the renewal will take. There seems to be no doubt that Adolfs has included no element of reform which is not essential to the survival of the Church. He does not say whether he thinks that things are now moving in this direction, but he does think that the Second Vatican Council was only a preliminary step to the future. In this he differs explicitly from the Cardinal Secretary of State, who (after this book was in the press) said that the reform was happily completed by the Council.

Should the changes occur without a revolution, the Church will be the only society in which a power structure voted itself out of existence. The Church has not done this yet; in fact it has not tried very hard even to get individual bishops to resign. An ecclesiastical revolution is not like a political revolution; at least it usually does not include violent civil war. The choice of the Constantinian Church was one such revolution, the reforms of Cluny may be classed as another, and the Reformation was yet another. It is evident that there is no typical effect of an ecclesiastical revolution, as there is no typical way in which it comes about.

Adolfs does not speak at all in tones similar to those of his celebrated Augustinian predecessor, Friar Martin Luther. But I do not think he demands any less of the Church than Friar Martin did. Whether the ecclesiastical establishment is any more favorable to such suggestions now than it was under Leo X is something we do not know. Adolfs does not think the Church is facing a reenactment of the Reformation. He does fear something which I, if I may be unduly immodest, have also suggested. The danger is not that people will leave the Church but that the government of the Church will simply become unimportant. Should the revolution take this form, nothing will be accomplished by the first step. If the Church is to survive the first step, it will have to make its government important. If it does not, one may say literally and not figuratively that it will be able to conduct all its services in the catacombs.

Snow White

DONALD BARTHELME

Atheneum, $4.50

DON CRINKLAW

In this incredible retelling of the old myth Snow White shares a modern apartment in the big city with her seven companions, who have such names as Kevin, Hubert and Clem. The seven support themselves, and Snow White, by washing skyscrapers and producing Chinese baby food. A menu, if that's the word, is included: "Baby Bow Yee (chopped pork and Chinese vegetables)" and so on. Snow White is not happy; she produces a four-page erotic poem (not quoted) and delivers herself of such as: "Oh I wish there were some words in the world that were not the words I always hear!" and "But who am I to love?" Clearly she is awaiting her Prince, and to speed his arrival she tumbles her long black hair invitingly from her window.

All number of strange things are to be found in the book's 181 slender large-print pages. No chapter is longer than two pages, most are far shorter, and some of all but incomprehensible. Occasionally one comes across a page containing a single sentence, such as, "Anathematization of the world is not an adequate response to the world," and halfway through the reader is invited to fill out a form: "Do you like the story so far? Yes ( ) No ( ).... Has the work, for you, a metaphysical dimension? Yes ( ) No ( )...." Monstrous puns abound: "The housewife! The very basebone of the American plethora!" and the fellow who lets the fires go out under the vats of Chinese baby food is guilty of "vatricide."

Even if such stunts *have* been turning up ever since *Tristram Shandy*, they are still bound to bring out the arch-conservative in an old-line reviewer and it thus becomes particularly painful, at least from one point of view, to bring the news that Mr. Barthelme's strange little book is also a very good one. For beneath the gags and the tricks and the puns a quiet, strangulated sobbing can be heard, and there emerges a touching picture of our unlovely world's reaction to pure loveliness (Snow White's ebony hair hanging from the window) and the fate of one who wishes for other words "besides the ones I always hear."

The author achieves his effect by blending the rhythms and vocabulary of our own day with those of a more poetic time; a pun is mixed in here and there, and such lines as these result: "Of course we had hoped he would take up his sword as part of the President's war on poetry. The time is ripe for that. The root causes of poetry have been studied and studied. And now that we know that pockets of poetry still exist in our great country, especially in the large urban centers, we ought to be able to wash it out totally in one generation if we put our backs into it."

When Snow White's hair emerges from the window of that house on Monument street, telling reactions take place. One of the seven companions is ready with a neat psychological evaluation: ". . . the significance of this act . . . the meaning of which is clear to all of us . . . It means that she is nothing else but a god-damn degenerate!" And the leader of a rock-and-roll band is moved by the sight of her hair to instruct his men henceforth to play only real music. Their response: "We are tired of having for a leader one who is nothing less a damned fool. Let's go down to the union hall, now, and write out the specifications for a grievance against him under Section Four . . . And we can think of

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other things, too, to add to the list of charges." And then comes that pathetically comic line that epitomizes the book's effect: "That will be amusing, writing out the charges."

The ending is a proper jumble (as distinct from an improper one): the awaited Prince dies violently of a poison the envious ones had prepared for Snow White, and the seven companions, with relief, are able to return to the production of the Chinese baby food. Three new varieties have been added, and "they are moving well." And this line is all but thrown away: "What gave us the idea that there was something better?"

Barthelme manages to avoid most of the vices common to this sort of apparently free-swinging composition: a piling-up of a collection of impenetrable anagrams for their own dear clever sakes, the sense of an author's corpulent ego sitting firmly atop each self-important word, and that depressing formlessness that makes the work of most "black humorists" as aesthetically valuable as ramblings heard from a psychiatrist's couch. Barthelme has rather a classic sense of form—what his grouping of short chapters, with their subtle cadences and measured tag-lines reminds me of is, oddly enough, a sonnet sequence—and an honorable regard for the dignity of the language. And happily absent is that chromium-plated, heartless efficiency that bothered me in similar efforts by Pynchon and Farina: wherever Barthelme's head may be, his heart is always visible.

A Catalogue of Sins

WILLIAM F. MAY

Holt, Rinehart, $4.95

THOMAS A. WASSMER

Kierkegaard wrote clinically about despair, Reinhold Niebuhr about the convolutions of pride, sensuality and dishonesty, but for most Protestant theologians primacy is given to man's sinfulness rather than to the diversity of his sins. William May's book reads like the work of a medieval moralist or a liberal Protestant preacher of the nineteenth-century, concentrating on the varieties of sin, as opposed to the preoccupation with the sinfulness of man in modern Neo-Orthodoxy. But the differences with the medievalist are significant. May's approach is not that of systematic theology but one that is existential, problematic, phenomenological. It attempts to avoid the traps of sentimentalism, moralism, legalism, and abstractionism.

Each sin is explored in its own terms, its structure, its scope, its guises, its deadliness, its fecundity and its appeal. The purpose is not to subordinate each of the sins to the exigencies of a systematic whole. To observe sin against the background of a total Christian horizon with each element in its proper place, ordered to every other element, would end up by missing sin "as it catches a man off-balance and without his maps."

Rahner-Vorgrimler's *Theological Dictionary* describes sin as "an act or the free decision of the whole personality against the Will of God as manifested in the orders of nature and grace and in verbal revelation." How much more direct and relevant to man's human condition is this phenomenological presentation of sin—"it stands for whatever I do that mars, mauls, inflates, depresses, disrupts, distorts or abandons humanity." This sounds so much like the *peccatum philosophicum* which has been criticized as inadequate by systematic theologians in the past. In these pages May concentrates upon the dynamics of sin in relation to man and not in direct relation to God. Sin in its many forms corrupts man, disorders his whole self before his neighbor. May brings vividly to life what theologians have referred to as the *macula* in sin but which they never developed with any seriousness.

May insists that sin, like grace, makes itself present in existential experience. What it does to man's concrete individual nature, not what it does to man's essential nature, is his over-riding theme. The Dorian Grey face of sin is seen in each individual sin that he examines. This is much more convincing than the theological manual's description of sin as a "turning away from God and a turning inordinately to a creature." Self-recognition becomes easy in the catalogue of sins; impurity of heart, faintheartedness, avarice, envy, neglect, betrayal, lust, deceit, craving and anxiety, pride and sloth.

The emphasis is placed upon Calvin's primary definition of sin as not simply disobedience, but basically infidelity; not simply rejection, rebellion, unbelief or corruption, but the accountable self violating its own proper destiny before God. It is a snarled, entangled relationship to the world and our neighbor. In a similar vein the new Dutch Cathechism calls sin "the refusal of the love of others and of the Other." Man is inextricably in the world and with his neighbors and many of the sins pluralize themselves in these involvements. Sin is always in a situational context which it both twists and shapes.

This existential, problematic, phenomenological approach would unquestionably bring insight and relevance into Roman Catholic Moral Theology. It starts with man in the vortex of sin rather than with an immutable God who is offended. The other attempts at a consideration of sins in their diversity begin with the command of God (St. Thomas), or the being of God (St. Augustine) or the act of God in Jesus Christ (Karl Barth). In none of these three ways is sin seen in all of its enticement, its human allure, its distortion and corruption of its victim. For example, in the sin of false worship or idolatry the authentic element of self-surrender (*anima*) tends to become self-destruction, and the authentic element of self-affirmation (*animus*) tends to become self-expansion. Idolatry is a "hidden *Liebestod* that prompts me to let myself be burnt up, and burnt out, by my idol. I immolate myself in it. Yet at the same time I borrow prestige from the idol. It is after all my god. I expand myself through it."

May knows theology and literature and combines both of them with the talents of a sensitive writer. In the essay on betrayal we read of the soldier who dies for his country and at his funeral his casket is draped with his country's flag. "When the coffin is about to

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be lowered into the ground the flag is neatly folded and withdrawn. At the last moment, if you will, it betrays him. A man may die for his country but the country does not die for the man." What does avarice do to its victim? It removes him from "flash floods and bag worms, from shapely legs to mishapen shadows at the end of the day."

Angus Wilson's perceptive comment about the specific feature of envy suggests deeper probing by May. Every capital sin offers a certain measure of satisfaction in its early stages; envy alone is without gratification at every stage. The man who really envies another, rarely admits it. Envy is a canker sore in the soul.

A book like this is the best proof that neither God nor sin is dead.

The Ecumenical Revolution

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

Doubleday, $5.95

PHILIP DEASY

"Far back in ecumenical history, in February 1965. . . ." So begins a recent article on ecumenism in *Time*. Almost as far back in history—in Easter Week of 1965, to be exact—Dr. Robert McAfee Brown delivered four lectures (the William Belden Noble Lectures) at Harvard University on the ecumenical movement. Now in late 1967, long years after, the lectures are published in book form. In the intervening era ecumenism has spread and spread. The ecumenical revolution has now become almost as dated as the sputnik revolution. There was uneasiness a few months ago when Father Andrew Greeley thought, and oddly enough, because of an open letter Dr. Brown had written to the American hierarchy, that ecumenism had become a casualty of the Vietnam war. It appears now to have recovered.

Dr. Brown remarks in his introduction that "it would be shattering to wake up some morning and discover that a revolution had taken place without our even knowing it." *Commonweal* readers knew all along, of course, that the revolution was taking place. Dr. Brown himself was telling them so in his regular contributions to this periodical. Five of these *Commonweal* articles reappear in *The Ecumenical Revolution*. The same readers will probably also be familiar with Hans Kung's *The Council, Reform* and *Reunion*, as well as another *Commonweal* article by Leonard Swidler, "Reappraising the Reformation," and Father Avery Dulles' sermon, "Luther's Unfinished Reformation," later published in *The Catholic Mind*. Dr. Brown relies heavily on these writings for his chapter, "The Reformation of the Interpretation of Reformation Interpretation." He also sees fit to reprint from his earlier book, *An American Dialogue* (written in collaboration with the late Father Gustave Weigel), the six ground rules for the dialogue. And if dialogue and ecumenism sound dated or "tired," to use Dr. Brown's word, how about reading for the umpteenth time about "The Highlights of Vatican II," (Chapter 9) and "The Achievements of Vatican II: A Brief Assessment" (Chapter 10)? These two chapters come under a more general title, "The Surprises of Vatican II." Surprises? In 1967? In short, *Commonweal* readers, at least, will get a strong impression of *déjà vu* from *The Ecumenical Revolution*.

If the foregoing sounds unfair to Dr. Brown, who remains, of course, as Father Greeley ecumenically called him, "almost everyone's favorite Protestant," let it be said that Dr. Brown himself almost begs for the soft impeachment. "As one," he writes in his introduction, "who has written his fair share of words about ecumenism, I believe we are approaching the time when such words will no longer be necessary. Instead of writing about being ecumenical, we will simply write ecumenically; instead of pleading for ecumenical activity, we will simply act ecumenically. . . . I could have no greater hope than that this book might make [ecumenism] more apparent to those presently unaware of it, thus making the book itself superfluous. To bring about its own expendability is therefore the greatest contribution to which this volume could aspire."

It may perhaps be added that those presently unaware of ecumenism are much more likely to be reading Father James Kavanaugh than Robert McAfee Brown. In any case the book should not be wholly expendable. Since Dr. Brown continues to teach his Stanford students Religion 195 ("The Ecumenical Movement"), *The Ecumenical Revolution* might well be given a second printing in a paperback edition for their use. College students, even in California, aren't as aware as their elders of the revolutions going on around them.

The Ecumenical Revolution, limiting itself to Catholic-Protestant dialogue (Eastern Orthodoxy is not included, but there is a chapter on ecumenism and the Jews), aims to "provide a map of the over-all ecumenical terrain." That it surely and thoroughly does. Parts of the terrain discussed include the all-important matter, as Father Groppi's Milwaukee crusade illustrates, of consolidating for common action, and the need for meeting together for common worship, the latter recently dramatized by the Dutch Catholics and their interfaith Eucharistic Suppers.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 395)

tunately, there seems to be no compromise acceptable to large numbers of Vietnamese; hence, they have taken to the gun to settle their quarrels. If the conflict were between "freedom" and "tyranny," there would be no question which side to support. The greatest joke of the whole war is that we probably believe our own propaganda.

A more sensible policy might recognize the violence endemic to the Third World as the expression of deeper problems than "Soviet expansionism." In societies ruled by thieves it is hardly surprising that somewhere, someone should resort to the gun to set things aright. And it is not surprising that the results of such endeavors lack the freedom Mr. Shannon is so anxious to discern in Saigon. The freedom extant in the Third World is the freedom of beggars to sleep beneath bridges and of peasants to vote in rigged elections. I do not say that that

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freedom is irrelevant; I simply say that if it disappears it will not be missed.

DENNIS HALE

Oakland, Calif.

To the Editors: I read William Shannon's "The Case for the War" (Dec. 8) with close attention. With much of what he says I can agree, but his basic reason for supporting the war seems to me unsound—we have to stop Communist aggression, and restore to peoples the right to settle their own destinies. This is his line . . .

Two points occur to me: 1. American intervention in Vietnam is saving the privileged military and Governmental forces there from the Communists, but how are the common people benefited? 2. Why it is that American intervention on behalf of the common man is called for only when the aggression, exploitation and tyranny are charged against the Communists? On our own doorstep so to speak there are dictatorships dedicated to the suppression of all legitimate popular movements for the amelioration of harsh conditions of life and there are military juntas supported by the American government, which in some cases were assisted by the CIA to overthrow duly elected governments (Guatemala is the classic instance). Papa Duvalier flourishes in Haiti; it was no U.S. army which overthrew the notorious Batista in Cuba; U.S. funds pour into Spain and help perpetuate the regime of the dictator Franco; no alarm was sounded in this country when the democratic process was suspended by military coup in Greece (but we recall a vastly different reaction years ago when the Communists seemed about to get on top).

Until William Shannon can explain why the welfare of the common man has to be treated so selectively, I am going along with the editorial position of *Commonweal,* namely that the war is illegal, immoral and not only unnecessary but actually damaging to the very people it is supposed to help . . .

THOMAS F. O'CONNOR

Princeton, N.J.

To the Editors: While agreeing with Shannon's over-all case supporting American policy in Vietnam (Dec. 8), I regret his failure to point more directly at the central weaknesses in the critics' objections to the war. The first of these is that the war is a civil one, precluding American intervention by that fact, an idea to be seen in one of *Commonweal's* searingly ironic editorials asking about our presumption "to save the Vietnamese from themselves." . . . Does *Commonweal* mean that so long as a conflict is civil, so long as it is Germans killing Germans or Spaniards killing Spaniards, no foreign intervention, however altruistic, is justified? Somehow I rather doubt that the editors would be as stoic about the matter if the strife-wracked nation were European and the insurgents were Fascists. . . .

On the other hand, I regret Shannon's blurring over the question of the casualty list. Can it be endless, even if the cause is right and the enemy real and mortal? . . . Many may smile at the "triumphalistic" prospect of our educating the Vietnamese about the meaning of freedom, to the point where, like the Spaniards against Franco's Fascists, they would be willing to absorb enormous

REVIEWERS

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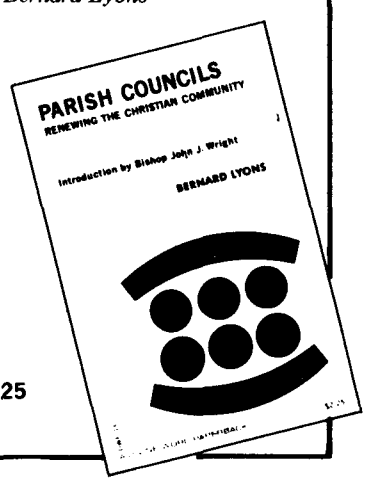
BOOK OF THE MONTH

PARISH COUNCILS
Renewing the Christian Community
Bernard Lyons

A growing sign of Church renewal in the United States is the parish council movement. Called for by Vatican II and now beginning to emerge as a new Church structure, the parish council is a grass-roots expression of the spirit of collegiality. Reporting and explaining this development, *Parish Councils* answers such questions as: What is a parish council? Why are they needed? How are they established and operated? What are they doing in the United States? With sample constitutions and bibliography. Introduction by Bishop John J. Wright



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casualties. But it is not a smiling matter, not a gratuitous piece of casuistry, to those Vietnamese who already, today, wish to remain in their country and raise their children as free from the rote catechism of the Viet Cong classroom as from that of the Catholic. The Catholic ideology was also idealistic and implicitly moral, but we should know, more than others, the spiritual waste that goes into a centuries-long battle to make the Christian ideal resonate through human freedom. DAN SULLIVAN

Priests and Marriage

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I read Peter Declan's "Trial by Laicization" (Dec. 8) and decided to put it on my library shelves next to *Marat/Sade*. But on second thought, I moved *Marat/Sade* to the section for children's books. JOHN B. SCHULTZ

Phoenix, Ariz.

To the Editors: Many thanks to Peter Declan for "Trial By Laicization" (Dec. 8). Many thanks to *Commonweal* for helping to expose such injustices. Many thanks to the Holy Spirit for His guidance; no trial, no dispensation; common sense and conscience.

A MARRIED PRIEST

Lancaster, Pa.

To the Editors: In the ever-increasing controversy over whether or not priests should be allowed to marry and continue to function as priests, I believe one consideration is often bypassed. That is, what percentage of married male Catholics today have a desire to become priests and would do so if permitted by the Church? If this percentage is large, as I think it is, it would be just another indicator that the celibate priesthood is maintained by the Church because it is traditional and despite innumerable indicators that Christianity would be enhanced by its elimination. Perhaps the cause for the elimination of celibacy might be aided if a national organization of married men interested in the priesthood was formed. MARK J. GALLAGHER

Christians and Israel

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Richard Rubenstein's article (Dec. 1) is deeply moving as it reveals, once more, Jewish dignity and courage in their uncompromising rectitude. On the other hand, is Mr. Rubenstein well qualified to discuss the Christian attitude in the Judeo-Arab conflict? I fail to see that it was unrealistic for the Jews to expect Christians to identify with Jewish feelings toward Israel, except insofar as the Jews should have known from millenary experience that Christians were never favorable to Jews.

But, if I understand him correctly, this is not Richard Rubenstein's position. He claims that, *bona fide*, the Christians' interests were not with the Jews. What kind of interests? From a Christian point of view, the choice should have been clear; between two neighbors, one about to be strangled and dumped into the sea, and another who might have to leave his home and wander away, it is evident that the first

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human and Christian duty is to jump to the rescue of the one about to be murdered. What interests? Those of the missionaries and the Christian churches in Arab lands? Had the State of Israel and her people been annihilated without official Christianity's lifting a finger, would the Christians have had the gall to go on preaching Christianity in Arab countries? True Christianity would have been dead, even if the institutions had survived.

The refugees? Could it be that, after being used for Arab propaganda, they should also be used by Christians as an excuse for Christian silence in the face of Israel's plight? Whether refugees are the victims of war or propaganda, their condition is always pitiful; there are some ten million refugees in the world, including the Jews who have been driven out of the Arab States. But, whatever the Arab refugees' predicament—and it is real—it cannot be compared with the anguish which must have gripped the Jews, and which should have gripped all Christians, as Israel faced armed invasion on all her borders. The Arabs had over 4 million square miles of Arab land to fall back on. The Israelis had the sea. And those who, quite improbably, might have survived the holocaust had no place to go. To the West? If I were a Jew I would not trust the West.

Does this mean that a Christian has to approve everything Israel did or does? Were it that simple! However, this time we were confronted with an either/or which should have elicited from us an immediate choice on Israel's behalf. Those of us who made that choice did not do it out of indifference to the Arabs, let alone out of hatred for them. It was a humane choice. It was also, I believe, the Christian choice to make. Contrary to Richard Rubenstein, I am among those who hold that Christians do "owe Jews a special debt." Granting that one does not want the relationship to be based on a guilt feeling because of bitter history, since, indeed, that does not facilitate "a frank and open encounter," there remains the fact that, in Péguy's words, "He was a Jew, a simple Jew." In the past, Christians found it convenient to forget this, and, apparently, many of them, the "realists," still do in practice, unaware as they seem to be of the indissoluble link between Judaism, the Jewish people and the land of Israel.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP

St. Louis, Mo.

To the Editors: I agree with Richard L. Rubenstein (Dec. 1) that few American Christians understand the religious and emotional hold the state of Israel has on Jews. My summer's experience in that unique land brought this home to me. Israel's will to exist and flourish has resulted in remarkable achievements—material and spiritual.

The faltering Christian response to last May's crisis situation may be due, in part, to the fact that Jewish-Christian dialogue has been largely confined to "official" and higher circles. We need lots more of it at all levels, in homes, schools, neighborhoods, in the city and in suburbia. Catholics, I feel sure, would profit by such opportunities to learn first hand about Jews as people and Judaism as one of the great world religions.

PATRICIA BARRETT, RSCJ

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: It is too bad for Rabbi Rubenstein that no one has yet really found the way to have his cake and eat it at the same time. But he deserves a medal for trying, unusually hard.

The effort, however, does not really compensate for his lack of logic, let alone the grandiose generalizations which sweep away two thousand years of Jewish history. Christian ecumenists owe it to themselves—no less than to Jews and Judaism—to inquire freely if "the Jews" are now really prepared to admit that "the territorial dimension of Judaism (has) been anticipatory for almost two thousand years." If so, what is Rabbi Rubenstein doing as a rabbinic exemplar of Judaism in Pittsburgh practicing whatever rabbinics he thinks warrant this assertion? Similarly, Christian ecumenists are obligated to challenge the mystifying pronouncement, "Jews were convinced that neither moral commitment nor humanitarian sentiments could any longer assure Jewish survival." It is doubtful if even Moshe Dayan would go so far to denigrate all else in the world but Israeli power.

What Rabbi Rubenstein has done is to claim "the Jews" have shifted the whole basis of their right to exist as a group from moral and humanitarian values to one of sheer naked power.

But the question immediately arises then as to why he wrote the article; and why did *Commonweal* give it exposure? What has the disparager of

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moral commitment and of humanitarian sentiments, the glorifier of "physical or psychological power," to say in dialogue with the believer in moral values and in humanitarianism? Where would Rabbi Rubenstein have his dialogue, once the "awesome transformations" in Jews and Christians which he sees are delineated clearly enough to talk about at all? On a practice rifle-range? And what "weapons" will he choose? Colt automatics? Or some of the sacred, authoritative texts, revered by both Christians and Jews and amenable to searching examination by both as, at least, part of a better understanding?

Rabbi Rubenstein seems to be saying that "six days in June" abrogated such 2,000-year-old postulates as "Not by power and not by might, but My spirit, saith the Lord"; and "Zion shall be redeemed with justice; and they that return to her with righteousness." He seems to forget that in the mouths of the Prophets, the phrase "at ease in Zion," relying upon "interest and power," was language of derision and contempt.

It must be clear that Rabbi Rubenstein, pontificating and without losing his "cool," has raised many more questions than he has answered. I cannot isolate all of these questions here, let alone suggest answers other than those implied by Rubenstein. But Vatican II clearly rejected the notion, advanced by other Rabbi Rubensteins at the time, that Zionist/Israeli political considerations were to be accepted as integral substance in ecumenical dialogue. The basic question, therefore, that Rabbi Rubenstein's article raises is for Christians and people like the editors of *Commonweal* to answer. Will they now yield on that Vatican II principle, stampeded by the clearly evident juggernaut of propaganda which is saying either you accept these power-political premises as integral parts of Jewish theology or there will be no talks. There are many Jews who, if they understood, would not subscribe to this kind of not-so-sophisticated blackmail because they look upon ecumenism not, basically, as political negotiations but as a common effort of all religiously motivated men to find at least a basis of mutual understanding for a coordinated assault upon all the nihilism, the disorientation, the loneliness of man in a power-and interest-mad world.

RABBI ELMER BERGER
Executive Vice-President
The American Council for Judaism

Lagging Behind

Elma, N.Y.

To the Editors: The parade of theological hardware in the second Commonweal Paper, Jesus, alerted me to a lesson which William Hamilton's survey at the end of the study firmly, politely, and unmistakably underlined — Catholic *avant garde* theologians are derivative. Unfortunately, they are about a decade behind their Liberal Protestant brothers. When they catch up, ex-bishop James Pike may be made their prophet—with Roman Catholicism adopting the Liberal Protestant stance. But a question remains. Protestant Theologians won't stand still. Where will they be when we catch up? Will Ecumenics take over? . . .

NELSON W. LOGAL

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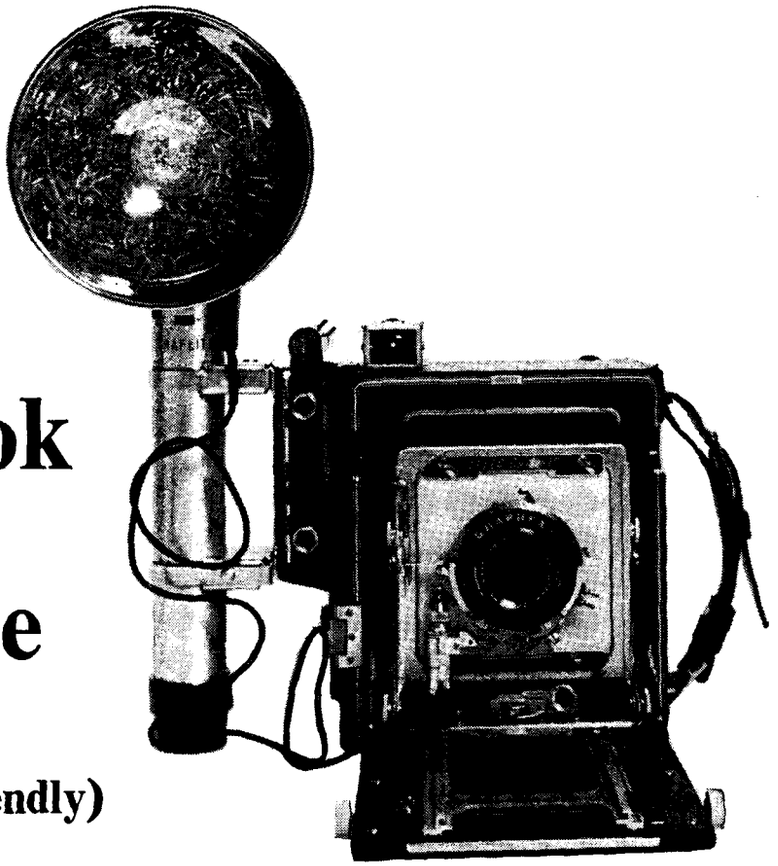

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